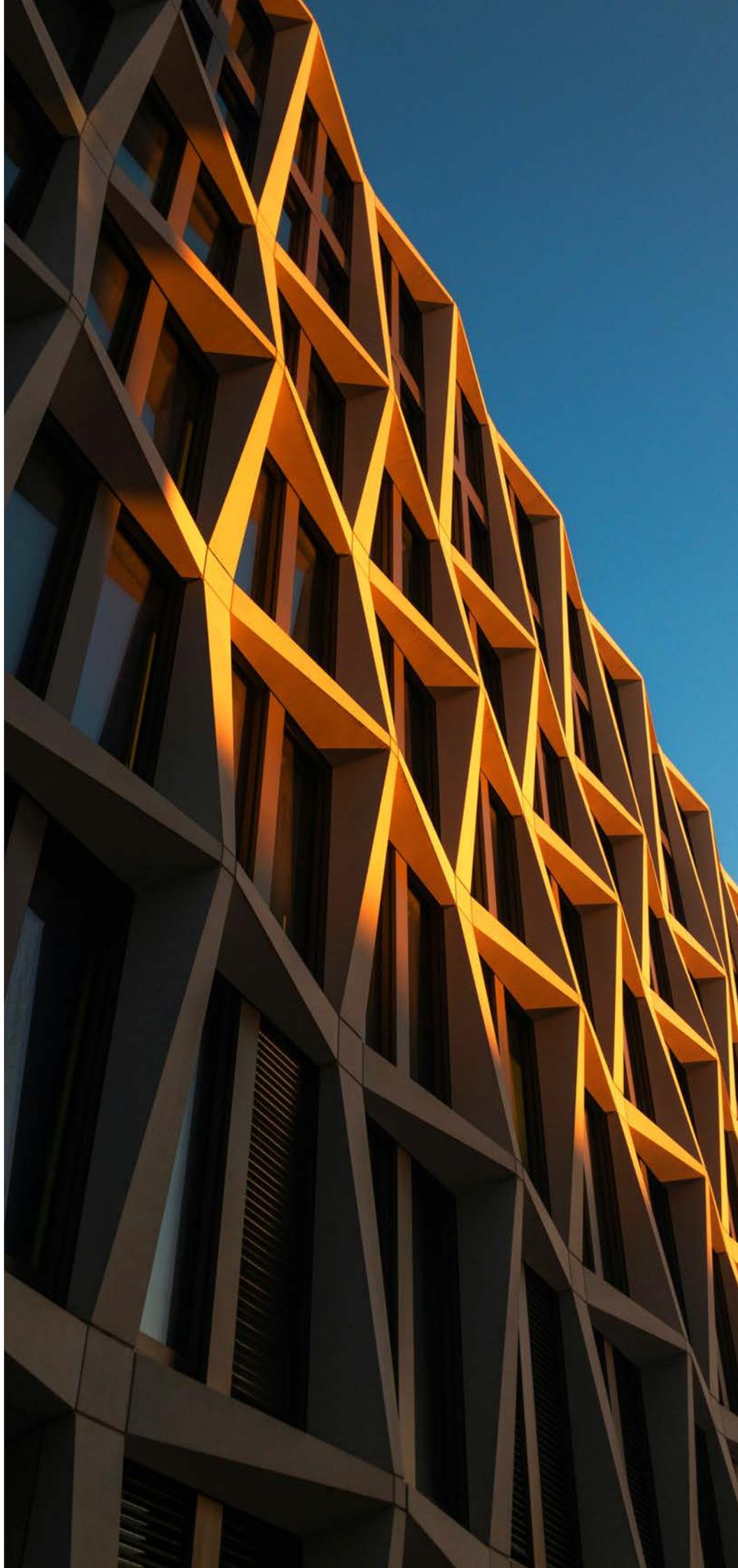




Architectural Technology Journal

FROM THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURAL TECHNOLOGISTS
£6.00 – ISSN 1361-326X – ISSUE #157 – SPRING 2026



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Published by

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Subscriptions

AT Journal is free to all members and affiliates of CIAT. Subscription rate for non-members is £40 (UK) and £50 (overseas) per annum (4 issues) or £6 per issue.

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ISSN 1361-326X.



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Editor's welcome

Well, it's the lunar new year and personally I'm excited, not just because it's the Year of the Horse, but because it's the Year of the *Fire Horse*. That's right, each animal comes with an element, which cycles every two years. And this year the moon's conjuring images of a horse made of pure flames, bounding passionately forward towards progress and adventure.



Quite the image. And it means this year is all about bounding forwards, which sounds good, doesn't it? With that in mind, our first issue of the year is jam-packed with content focusing on the future. We kick things off on the next page with BSI standards to look out for in 2026, and then on page 12, the School of Biophilia's Amelia Chasey MCIAT talks about its vision for the future of biophilic design. The Institute's own Jack Fleming breaks down the Government's new Warm Homes Plan on page 36, outlining CIAT's response to it and what more can be done to ensure everyone will be living in warm, safe, functional homes in the future.

It's been almost a decade since the Grenfell tragedy, and on page 26, Dan Rigamonti and John Smith MCIAT talk about what the sector has learned and what it still has to learn from it. There is work to be done if we want to reach the milestone in 2027 with evidence of real, lasting change.

The horse also gallops towards the Honorary Officer elections in September, and we're giving the nominees the opportunity to introduce themselves in this issue (page 41) as they vie for the positions of Honorary Treasurer, Vice-President Technical, and President. They are all Chartered Architectural Technologists volunteering to give their enthusiasm, experience, strategic leadership, skills and time to the Institute, set within the Strategic Plan.

But it's not all about the future; we're also giving time to celebrate the past too. For those who missed it – or if you were there and would like to relive it in glorious summary form – we have our rundown of the

2025 AGM and 60th anniversary gala that took place/ was celebrated in Dublin in November on page 18. We have an update of what your President has been up to since taking office on page 14, our regular Policy update on page 48, and a summary of the Institute's delegation visit to Dubai in October on page 24.

If that wasn't enough, we also have features from all sorts of industry professionals on building materials, new trends, and professional hurdles for ATs to overcome.

Well then, you'd better get reading and I'll see you next time. Hope you're having a great start to the year! See you in the summer when hopefully we'll all be tanned and so over the fact that our New Year's resolutions added up to nought. Huzzah!

Tim Fraser
Deputy Editor

Key BSI standards to watch in 2026

Words by Dan Rossiter, Built Environment Sector Lead, BSI

As industries evolve, standards must keep pace to ensure safety, efficiency, and innovation. This year, several important updates and new publications are on the horizon. Here's a look at some of the most significant standards being refreshed or introduced in 2026.

PAS 1958 – Data and information standards landscape (Q1 2026)

Data is the backbone of modern Architectural Technology. PAS 1958 provides a comprehensive view of the data and information standards landscape (including BIM), helping organisations navigate the complexity of managing and sharing information effectively. The upcoming PAS will reflect emerging technologies and practices, ensuring alignment with digital transformation trends.

PAS 2000 – Bringing safe products to market (Q1 2026)

Consumer safety remains a top priority. PAS 2000 sets out guidance for organisations to ensure construction products are safe before reaching the market. The PAS will incorporate lessons learned from recent product safety and regulatory changes, supporting businesses in maintaining compliance and protecting those who interface with construction products, such as Architectural Technologists.

BS 8670-2 – Construction product-related competence (Q4 2026)

Competence in construction is critical for quality and safety. BS 8670-2 focuses on the skills and knowledge required for those working with construction products or their information. The standard will strengthen frameworks for competence assessment, helping the industry meet higher expectations for accountability and performance.

BS EN ISO 19650 Series – Information management using BIM (Q4 2026)

Building Information Modelling (BIM) continues to transform the built environment sector. The ISO 19650 series provides a global framework for managing information throughout the lifecycle of built assets.

These updates will enhance collaboration, reduce risks, and improve efficiency across projects worldwide.

BS 5837 – Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction (Q4 2026)

Sustainability and green infrastructure are more important than ever. BS 5837 provides guidance on integrating trees into construction and demolition projects, promoting harmony between the built and natural environment. The revised standard will reinforce best practices for tree care, supporting biodiversity and climate resilience.

Why these updates matter

Standards are not static; they evolve to meet new challenges and opportunities. These upcoming publications and changes will help organisations stay compliant, competitive, and aligned with best practices in safety, sustainability, and digital innovation.

To keep up with these changes, businesses need flexible, reliable access to the latest standards.

Access standards with ease – for every business size

BSI Knowledge is the UK National Standards Body flagship digital standards library that provides up to date access to a catalogue of over 100,000 standards.

- **Costeffective and flexible:** Choose a subscription that fits your needs. Access predefined modules or build your own collection, without paying for individual standards.
- **Copyrightcompliant team access:** Share standards across your teams confidently and legally, avoiding the limitations of singleuser PDF purchases.
- **Always up to date:** Receive automatic notifications and access documents with tracked changes whenever standards are updated, eliminating the need for manual version comparisons.

For members who are microbusinesses, CIAT have partnered with BSI to promote a new cost-effective subscription designed specifically for companies with fewer than 10 employees and an annual turnover under £630K. The solution provides view online access to the entire BSI standards catalogue so you can read, search and, where required, highlight and snip areas that are needed offline. The online catalogue is updated daily with new versions and also provides access to historical and draft documents. Annual subscription fees start at £360 per year.

If you would like to know more about the offer, please register your interest in the Microbusiness Subscription by scanning this QR code and a representative from BSI will be in touch to explain how the solution works.



Not a microbusiness? We've got you covered

If your organisation is larger or has more extensive compliance needs, our BSI Knowledge subscription model offers tailored packages designed to scale with your requirements.

Speak to us about a tailored BSI Knowledge subscription and discover the right access model for your organisation. Free trials are available.



How construction can cut its carbon footprint by caring for soil

Words by Keith Morley, Managing Director, Ruskins

Soil is often dismissed as mere dirt, but it is one of the planet's most powerful carbon stores, holding more than all of the world's forests combined. Yet in our rush to build, pave and develop, we are neglecting one of our greatest natural climate allies. For the construction industry, which moves and replaces millions of tonnes of soil each year, this is a hidden opportunity – one of the most practical, cost-effective steps it can take toward achieving net zero.

Soil is alive. It's a dynamic ecosystem of minerals, organic matter, water, air and billions of microorganisms. Within this living matrix, carbon is continuously captured, transformed and stored. Globally, soils hold roughly three times more carbon than the atmosphere. But every time we strip, compact, or dispose of topsoil, we interrupt that natural process and release stored carbon back into the air.

When soil biology thrives, it sequesters carbon naturally through plant roots, microbial activity and the slow accumulation of organic matter. This carbon cycle reduces atmospheric CO₂ and also improves fertility, drainage and biodiversity. Healthy soil literally breathes life into landscapes, supporting resilient ecosystems that is better at withstanding floods, droughts and erosion. For construction, this means one simple truth

- how we move and manage the ground beneath us directly influences our carbon footprint.

The UK's construction sector destroys 10 times the soil than is lost through natural erosion across the UK each year. With the associated loss of ability to store Carbon. Each dig, each heavy vehicle, each stripped layer of topsoil has a climate consequence. The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee estimates that while UK soils currently store 9.8 billion tonnes of carbon, they hold only about half of their full potential due to centuries of degradation.



Traditionally, soil has been treated as waste, something to be stripped, stored in heaps and replaced at the end of a project. But that approach destroys its structure and kills the biological life within it, dramatically reducing its ability to store carbon. At Ruskins, we've found that by restoring and managing soil biology, we can increase its carbon storage capacity by up to 75% in just six months. That is a measurable, achievable gain that starts the moment soil is treated as a living system, not an inert material.

Biodiversity within the soil also increases by the same rate, everything above the soil is supported by what is below (this is not obvious from BNG, as it is excluded, despite, holding 57% of the species on each and the total weight of life in soil outweighing all other on land).

Forward-thinking developers are already rewriting the rulebook. By integrating soil management plans into their environmental strategies, they are turning potential carbon losses into long-term gains. This means minimising soil disturbance, segregating different soil types on site and ensuring topsoil is reused and revitalised, not simply stored and forgotten.

The future lies in biologically active landscaping. Using proactive soil biology applications, we can design developments that actively capture and store carbon through healthy soils. This approach enhances biodiversity, improves drainage and even boosts flood resilience, all while supporting net-zero objectives.

In essence, every project has the potential to become a small carbon sink rather than a source of emissions. Multiply that across thousands of sites and construction could move from being a major carbon contributor to one of the most important players in climate mitigation.

We do have to acknowledge, however, that the biggest challenge is visibility. You cannot see carbon in soil, so it rarely makes it into sustainability reports or carbon audits. But that's changing fast. Advances in digital mapping, soil sensors and carbon modelling now allow developers to quantify the carbon value of the ground they manage. Soon, soil carbon could even become a tradable asset, much like forestry credits,

creating financial incentives for better soil stewardship.

For now, the strongest motivation is reputational and environmental. Clients, investors and regulators increasingly expect developers to go beyond compliance to prove that their projects genuinely support climate goals. Healthy soil therefore ticks multiple boxes to include carbon storage, biodiversity net gain, flood management and even long-term landscape performance.

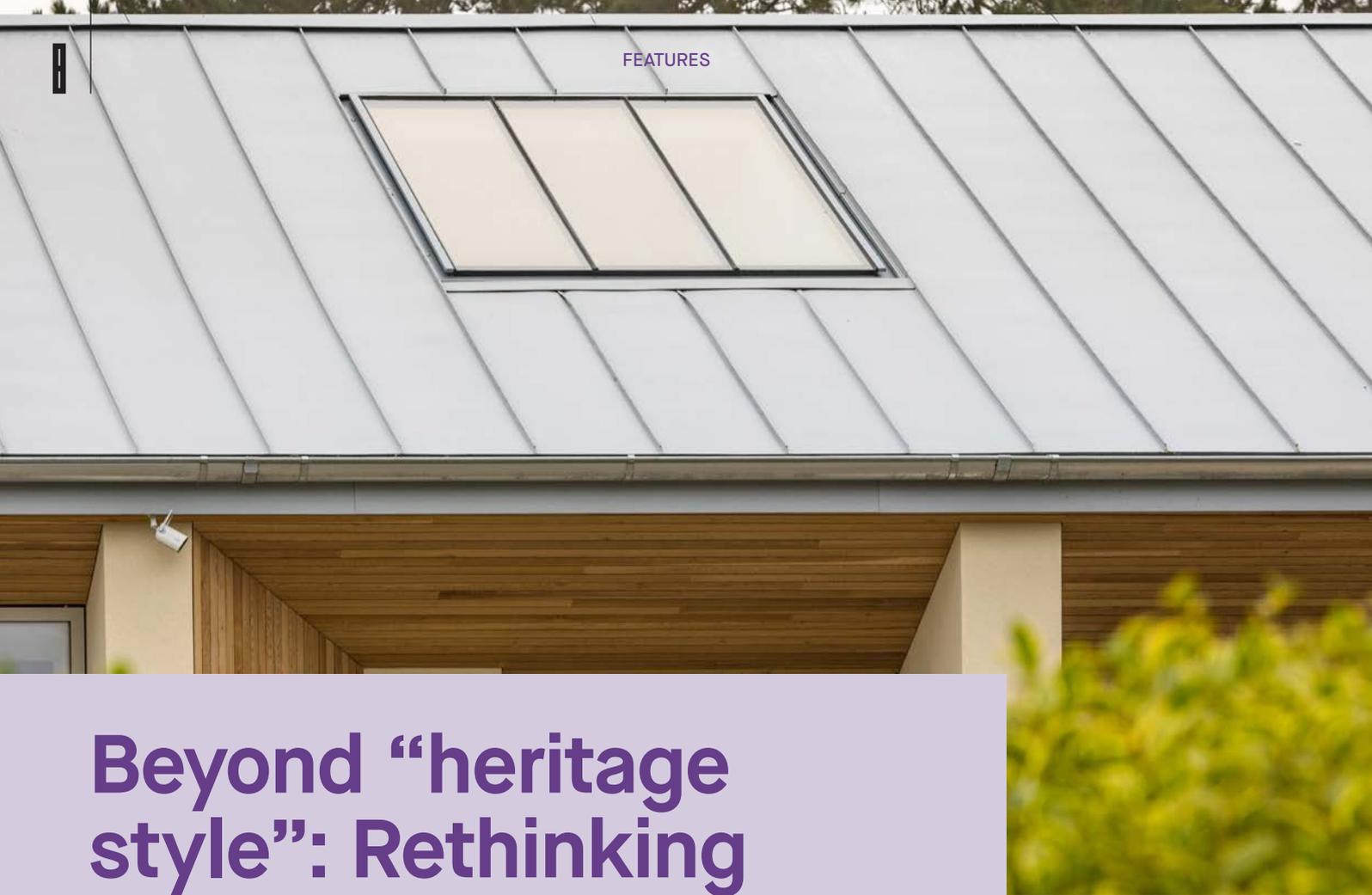
Government policy is catching up too. The Environment Act mandates biodiversity net gain, yet most planning frameworks still overlook the soil's fundamental role in delivering it. That will change. As we better understand how soil health underpins everything from water retention to carbon sequestration, the industry's approach to land management will have to evolve.

For Ruskins, soil is not a by-product, it's a foundation. Our work restoring and improving soil health on construction sites has shown that climate resilience starts from the subsoil up. Unlocking the carbon potential of soil is not about new technology or expensive interventions. It's about mindset. It's about seeing soil as an ally rather than an obstacle, a renewable, repairable and incredibly effective carbon storage system that we disturb at our peril.

All this means that the construction industry has an extraordinary opportunity to redefine its relationship with the ground it builds upon. Each site can either contribute to the problem or become part of the solution. If we're serious about achieving net zero, the message couldn't be clearer - we must start caring for the carbon beneath our feet. Soil is not dirt. It's the foundation of our climate future and it's time the construction industry built with that truth in mind. ■

How we move and manage the ground beneath us directly influences our carbon footprint.





Beyond “heritage style”: Rethinking rooflight specification in historic buildings

Words by Paul Trace, Director, Stella Rooflight

Over the past decade, the specification of rooflights in historic and sensitive buildings has evolved significantly. Advances in performance, detailing and thermal efficiency have broadened what is possible, while planning authorities and conservation officers have become increasingly familiar with rooflights as a legitimate way to introduce natural light into traditionally challenging spaces.

Alongside this progress, however, a subtle shift has taken place in how suitability is assessed. Terms such as “heritage style” are now widely used to describe products intended for conservation contexts, often implying that visual similarity alone is sufficient justification for their use. While appearance is clearly important, this trend risks oversimplifying a far more complex set of considerations rooted in material performance, longevity and long-term stewardship.

Heritage is not a look to be applied. It is a responsibility, and one that extends well beyond the moment a project is signed off.

Historic buildings are not static artefacts. They are layered structures shaped by centuries of use,

adaptation and repair. Every material introduced today becomes part of that ongoing story and, in time, part of the fabric future custodians must manage.

True conservation has always been about stewardship rather than replication. It asks not only how an intervention appears at the point of installation, but how it will behave, age and endure over decades. This distinction matters because many modern components are designed around relatively short replacement cycles, whereas historic buildings were never intended to be subject to frequent intervention.

Roofscape in particular demand careful consideration. They are among the most visually sensitive elements of historic buildings and are

exposed to the harshest environmental conditions. Materials introduced here must do more than look appropriate on day one. They must withstand prolonged exposure, weather predictably and remain stable over the long term, often with limited opportunity for easy replacement.

Much of the discussion around rooflights understandably focuses on initial appearance. Sightlines, reflectivity, profile depth and proportion all play an important role in determining whether an intervention is visually acceptable.

But conservation decisions rarely end at completion. A more searching question is how a rooflight will perform and appear after twenty, thirty or fifty years in situ.

Different materials age in very different ways. Some weather gradually and consistently, developing a surface character that feels increasingly at home within traditional roofscapes. Others rely on finishes or coatings that can degrade unevenly, leading to visual inconsistency or functional failure far sooner than expected.

In modern buildings, replacement may be inconvenient. In historic buildings, it is often disruptive, costly and complex. Access can be difficult, planning approvals may need to be revisited, and disturbance to historic fabric is rarely trivial. What initially appeared to be a modest intervention can quickly become disproportionate.

From a conservation perspective, longevity is therefore not simply a performance metric. It is a measure of how respectfully a modern intervention allows a building to continue its life with minimal disruption.

Any discussion of specification must acknowledge the economic environment in which the construction industry currently operates. Across the UK, building projects are facing sustained cost pressures driven by labour shortages, wage increases, material price volatility and constrained margins.

Recent forecasts suggest that building costs and tender prices are set to rise further over the coming years, reflecting structural pressures rather than short term fluctuation. At the same time, recent budget decisions have increased employer costs, adding further strain to an industry already operating within tight financial parameters.

In this context, it is entirely understandable that clients and project teams scrutinise upfront costs closely. Every specification decision is evaluated through the lens of immediate value for money. Products that appear cost effective at purchase price inevitably attract attention. However, in historic and listed buildings, this narrow focus can obscure the longer term risk profile of a decision. A component that performs adequately in the short term but requires premature



replacement can introduce significant future costs, not just financially, but in terms of programme disruption, planning complexity and impact on historic fabric.

Seen this way, cost should be understood not only as an expense to be minimised, but as a proxy for long term risk. Materials and systems that prioritise durability and predictable ageing reduce the likelihood of repeat intervention at a time when budgets, resources and regulatory capacity are already under pressure.

At the same time, the marketplace has seen a noticeable increase in products described as “heritage style”. In many cases, this reflects manufacturers seeking to expand their portfolios into what is perceived as a resilient or specialist sector, often driven by price sensitivity and volume.

There is nothing inherently wrong with broader market participation. The challenge arises when heritage suitability is defined primarily by visual cues, without sufficient consideration of material longevity, ageing behaviour or long term compatibility with historic structures.

Surface similarity can be persuasive in planning submissions, particularly where time pressures limit deeper interrogation. Yet heritage performance cannot be assessed on appearance alone. A product may satisfy an aesthetic requirement today while creating avoidable challenges decades later.

This trend highlights the importance of informed specification. It is not about restricting choice, but about ensuring that decisions are grounded in a clear understanding of long-term consequences, rather than short term visual reassurance.

Conservation is, by its nature, an intergenerational discipline. Decisions made today will be inherited by future owners, architects and conservation officers, who will judge them not by intention, but by outcome.

The most successful interventions are often those that attract the least attention over time. They age quietly, perform reliably and do not demand repeated intervention. They become part of the building’s fabric rather than a recurring problem to be managed.

As discussions around rooflights in historic buildings continue to evolve, there is an opportunity to move beyond the language of “heritage style” and towards a more meaningful consideration of heritage impact. Longevity, material integrity and long-term performance should sit at the centre of that conversation.

By thinking in decades rather than product cycles, and by reframing cost in terms of risk and legacy, we can make specification decisions that genuinely respect the buildings entrusted to us. In doing so, we protect not only individual projects, but the integrity of our built heritage for generations to come. ■



Timber treading lightly on the landscape - the future for carbon negative building materials

Words by West Fraser

It was back in 2012 in its Living Planet Report when the World Wildlife Fund asserted that, if the Western developed nations continued with their pattern of consumption, we would need *three* planet's worth of resources by 2050. During the years since then, consumerism and population have expanded across regions like Africa and parts of Asia, with supposedly sustainable activities such as sourcing the minerals required for electrical vehicles steadily scarring once pristine landscapes.





Undoubtedly, the UK is by no means the only country where housebuilding is failing to keep up with the crisis in demand



Meanwhile, the extra 1.1 billion people added to the population over that time not only have to be fed but also accommodated which means the need to access sufficient environmentally-friendly, and ideally carbon negative, building materials has become just as important a goal as maximising the cultivation of drought resistant plants. Undoubtedly, the UK is by no means the only country where housebuilding is failing to keep up with the crisis in demand.

The past quarter century has seen significant increases in the use of Offsite technology or Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), with engineered timber being the most popular primary material across the sector in most of Europe; with producers of competing materials also embracing sustainability goals.

Carbon negative materials are defined as those which sequester more carbon than they emit during their life cycle with other examples including hempcrete and recycled steel, aluminium or concrete. All of them, though particularly the trio of metals, constitute a precarious balance involving embodied energy, the depletion of natural resources and the time required for their replacement. Significantly, however, the formation of ores and other mineral deposits are defined by geological epochs rather decades.

As an increasingly important and costly factor, the amount of energy which goes into producing common building materials is well understood, with recycled steel requiring 74% less energy for its manufacture than the virgin product, a figure which rises to 95% for recycled aluminium which is popular for secondary structural elements like curtain walling. Recycled steel is also now being utilised for a minor proportion of the rebar required to take the tensile forces within reinforced concrete, while recycled aggregates and waste products, like pulverised fuel ash and ground granulated blast furnace slag, are routinely specified to offset the use of energy intense cement. Ironically though, the supply of PFA and GGBS is rapidly reducing as coal-fired power plants and steel foundries are razed to the ground in the fight to counter Climate Change, making the construction industry's quest for "ConcreteZero" ever more difficult.

The harsh reality, then, is that the heavyside construction methodologies which shaped so much of the infrastructure which surrounds us is desperately scrabbling to reach the level of sustainability which for timber can quite literally come naturally. This fact does not, of course, mean that timber-based building systems are automatically virtuous, and due diligence has to be employed to ensure that their specification will be good for the planet.

As the recent COP 30 in Brazil reminded us, forests are the lungs of the Earth, a resource we squander at our peril which is why chain of custody and whole life strategies for the use of wood are crucial. Indeed, the need for constant vigilance was highlighted last year by the organisation Earthsight when it produced the video entitled "Blood stained Birch" which exposed how since the start of the war in Ukraine, more than €1 billion of Russian plywood has been wrongly given FSC-accreditation by China and sold into Europe.

Once fully implemented, the European Union's Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) will offer a substantial bulwark against illegal and unsustainable cropping of timber, but responsible manufacturers have already made significant strides to ensure their own operations are as well managed and transparent as possible.

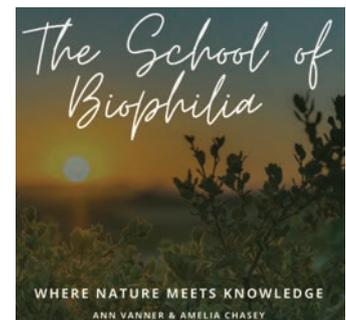
With a high proportion of the company's supplies of raw materials coming from properly-managed forests within the British Isles, and huge investment having been made in areas like production, transport and cutting waste, coupled with the use of biomass for the drying processes and a policy of only buying power from guaranteed renewable sources, the entire product range of West Fraser in the UK has now achieved Carbon Negative status. This ensures its own customer network can be assured that the panel products they are using to produce structural insulated panels (SIPs) and other offsite systems like floor cassettes, as well as for sheathing, decking and other applications, all fully meet the spirit as well as the regulations which will expand the use of carbon negative building materials. ■



Embracing biophilia: the power of nature in Architectural Technology and education

Words by Amelia Chasey MCIAT

Since I graduated with a First-Class Honors degree in Architectural Technology from the University of Central Lancashire in 2016, my professional journey has been shaped by a deep exploration of the relationship between architecture and wellbeing. This led me to pursue a Masters in Arts Health, where I focused on how architecture — an artform in itself — can be harnessed to improve health and overall wellbeing.



During my studies, I personally faced a significant health challenge: a severe fall while I was a gymnast left me relying on daily pain relief and it was only when I was forced to confront pain and discomfort that I truly grasped how deeply the built environment affects us. This realisation sparked a desire within me to make a difference.

That's when I discovered biophilia — a concept that describes our inherent need to connect with nature.

At its core, biophilia is humanity's intrinsic bond with the natural world. It's more than just enjoying a

walk in the park; it's an essential part of our physical, emotional, and cognitive wellbeing. Research shows that incorporating natural elements into environments like schools, offices, and homes significantly boosts creativity, focus, and happiness. However, as urbanisation and screen time increase, many of us are losing touch with this fundamental connection to nature.

It was this understanding that led me to co-found The School of Biophilia with Ann Vanner. We believe in the transformative power of reconnecting with nature.

Becoming a Chartered Architectural Technologist

has given me both the technical expertise and professional responsibility to design buildings that are not only functional and compliant, but beautiful, healing, and restorative. It allows me to bridge creativity with evidence-based design, ensuring that spaces actively support physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing while responding sensitively to their natural context.

At The School of Biophilia, we design buildings, provide biophilic design consultancy, and deliver workshops and CPDs for a wide range of building users. Our aim is to empower educators, professionals, organisations, and communities to understand and apply nature-led principles within the built environment—using biophilic design as a tool to improve health and overall quality of life.

Key themes of The School of Biophilia

1. Biophilia in primary education: nurturing curiosity from the start.

Children are naturally drawn to the wonders of nature, making primary education the ideal setting to foster this connection. In our first themed week, we'll explore how outdoor learning, the use of natural materials in classrooms, and simple additions like indoor plants can have a profound impact on young learners' development.

2. Secondary and higher education: deepening engagement and understanding.

As students mature, education becomes more focused on preparing them for the future — and biophilic design can play a pivotal role. We'll delve into how secondary schools and universities can integrate biophilic principles to reduce stress, enhance student engagement, and promote mental health. From green rooftops to integrating environmental science into curricula, we'll highlight ways to teach sustainability while nurturing academic growth.

3. Professional development and workplaces: creating lifelong impact.

Biophilia isn't just for students; it's a philosophy that can transform every stage of life. We look at how professionals and organisations can benefit from biophilic design in their workplaces. We'll show how incorporating nature into office spaces boosts productivity and good mental health, and how professional development can encourage leaders to embed sustainability into their industries.

Why biophilic education matters

Biophilic education is transformative, especially in primary schools. By integrating nature into the curriculum, we create opportunities for children to grow in ways that foster curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong appreciation for the environment.

Cognitive and academic growth through nature

Biophilic learning promotes cognitive development by engaging children in hands-on activities such as gardening and nature-based problem-solving. These experiences make abstract concepts more tangible, enhancing retention and understanding.

Emotional wellbeing and mindfulness

Exposure to nature reduces stress, boosts emotional resilience, and encourages mindfulness. Outdoor activities such as forest walks or outdoor meditation

help children manage their emotions and develop healthy coping mechanisms.

Fostering creativity and curiosity

Using natural materials in art and open-ended play fosters creativity and imaginative thinking. These activities ignite a child's natural curiosity and cultivate a sense of wonder, encouraging them to explore and learn more about the world around them.

Environmental stewardship and responsibility

Engaging with nature from a young age fosters a sense of responsibility for the planet. Through eco-projects and sustainable practices, children learn the importance of caring for the world and become future environmental stewards.

Holistic learning environments

Blending outdoor and traditional classroom education creates a dynamic environment that supports both academic and social development. This holistic approach helps children thrive, not just as students, but as individuals in a rapidly changing world.

Biophilic learning reshapes the educational experience, particularly in primary schools. By incorporating nature into the classroom, we help children develop cognitively, emotionally, and socially. This approach not only instils curiosity and creativity but also lays the foundation for lifelong environmental stewardship. Primary education should not just teach children about the world; they should learn with the world, forming deep, lasting connections with the natural environment.

Biophilic education is more than just a pedagogical strategy; it is a movement that nurtures healthier, happier, and more inspired learners.

Join us on our journey

In April, we launched The School of Biophilia Playbook, which outlines our mission, values, and vision for the future of biophilic design in education. Scan the QR code to read it in full.



Moving forward, we will continue to share valuable content through our website and social media platforms. Our aim is to provide teachers, professionals, and parents with practical tips on how to incorporate nature into education, whether in the classroom or at home. We also offer workshops for schools and other educational institutions to help them implement biophilic principles in their environments. ■





Update from the President Spring 2026

Words by Usman Yaqub PCIAT

Now that I have had time to reflect on the AGM and Gala hosted by the Ireland Centre, marking both our 60th Anniversary and my inauguration as President, I wanted to write to the membership to share highlights of my work leading up to and since these events.

In the lead-up to the AGM, I was fully engaged in attending events, speaking engagements and judging activities, alongside my ongoing responsibilities at Studio Yaqub Architecture, the University of the West of England (UWE), and through my leadership of the 'CPD in 43' initiative, among other professional commitments where I provide strategic leadership and management guidance across a range of organisations.

Earlier in the year, I was honoured to serve as a judge for the Building Designers Association of Australia's (BDAA) National Design Excellence Awards 2025, held on the Sunshine Coast. Congratulations once again to all the winners.

In November, I attended the AT Awards at their new venue, One Marylebone, which welcomed a sold-out audience and showcased an impressive range of award-winning work. It was excellent to see Eddie Weir and Matt Allwright delivering such a well-run event, and congratulations again to all recipients.

I also attended CIAT's North West Regional Conference at Material Source, where I had the opportunity to speak alongside a diverse group of presenters who demonstrated excellence in

Architectural Technology across projects ranging from heritage restoration to large-scale urban regeneration.

It was a pleasure to return to teaching on the Architectural Technology & Design programme at UWE, where I have now been involved for over five years. The enthusiasm and curiosity of the students continues to be a consistent source of energy and inspiration.

Additionally, I participated in a roundtable discussion with the RTPI and other CIC member institutions, focusing on how we can strengthen inter-institutional relationships, generate new ideas and accelerate positive change across the built environment sector.

In November, we held our AGM in Dublin, an event truly worthy of the history books. Alongside celebrating our 60th Anniversary, we heard from a range of insightful speakers, and I was honoured to be inaugurated as CIAT's 32nd President. I would like to personally thank everyone who attended and for the many kind messages received. The warmth of the welcome from the AT community has been deeply moving and I am still riding that wave of enthusiasm.

It was particularly fitting to reflect, during the Gala Dinner at the Mansion House, a venue that has hosted

many notable figures including Nelson Mandela, on the collective efforts of the hundreds of individuals who have shaped the Institute over the decades, especially those who steered CIAT through Chartership and other pivotal moments in its history.

Following my return to the UK, I attended the Greater London Student Awards, championed by Niall Healy, who was recently awarded a Gold Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the London region. It was a privilege to celebrate the achievements of such talented students. The energy in the room was a powerful reminder that the future of our profession is in excellent hands.

Eddie Weir and I also recorded an episode of the Where It's AT podcast, where we explored leadership lessons, defining milestones and the demands of the future. Along the way, we even found ourselves discussing Swiss Army knives and Rubik's Cubes, both unexpectedly useful metaphors for problem-solving and leadership.

Throughout this period, I have remained in close contact with our Chief Executive, Tara Page, and the team at City Road, who are working tirelessly on initiatives to sustain momentum, enhance our visibility and deliver tangible benefits for members and society more broadly. The three pillars of my presidency are Develop, Value and Retain, and I look forward to progressing these themes further. I have already engaged with many members on new initiatives and encouraged others to become involved through their regions, Centres and specialist interest groups.

By way of example, we recently released CIAT's response to RIBA's announcement and the wider debate around regulatory reform. The Institute continues to advocate for a system that prioritises competence and safety-critical functions, ensuring regulation remains proportionate, inclusive and genuinely beneficial to



society. Any reform must be co-designed across the sector and deliver clarity, fairness and opportunity for all competent professionals.

More recently, I attended the RTPI Presidential Inauguration in King's Cross, London. It is encouraging to see such ambition and leadership in a discipline that has such profound societal impact. As planning continues to take centre stage nationally, we look forward to working closely with our partners at RTPI and beyond to ensure our collective work is effective, relevant and truly irresistible.

Alongside these commitments, I continue to lead my studio with the support of a talented team. We are working across a wide range of sectors, pushing boundaries where appropriate and delivering well-considered, coordinated design outcomes on every project.

On a personal note, this January I undertook a 300-mile cycling challenge across the Saudi Arabian desert to raise funds for orphans, something I am extremely proud of. Cycling in 40-degree heat was no small feat and certainly an experience I will never forget.

Finally, reflecting on some of the most pressing challenges of our time, there is an urgent need for greater focus on health and safety, particularly building safety and CDM, alongside delivering warm homes and improving the quality of the spaces in which we live, work and dwell. Quality remains central to my thinking, especially at a time when parts of our society are living in conditions that have been described as worse than Victorian-era housing.

We must continue to lead with purpose, compassion and professionalism in addressing these realities. ■

I have already engaged with many members on new initiatives and encouraged others to become involved through their regions, Centres and specialist interest groups.





A letter from the King!

Words by Tim Fraser, Co-Editor

On 6 November 2025, CIAT received a letter from His Majesty King Charles III, congratulating CIAT on its sixtieth anniversary. After then-President of CIAT Eddie Weir sent a letter of loyal greetings on behalf of the Institute, which His Majesty described as “thoughtful” and “kind”, we received a reply from Buckingham Palace. Within the letter, a representative of the King told Eddie that His Majesty sent “his heartfelt warm good wishes to all those who will be present” for the 60th anniversary gala and AGM, which took place at the Round Room at Mansion House in Dublin on Saturday 22 November, calling it “a most memorable event.”



CIAT first received its Royal Charter of Incorporation and Bye-Laws on 22 July 2005, which was granted by Queen Elizabeth II. Under its Royal Charter the objectives of the Institute were deemed to be: to promote, for the benefit of society, the science and practice of Architectural Technology; to facilitate the development and integration of technology into architecture and the wider construction industry to continually improve standards of service for the benefit of industry and of society; and to uphold and advance the standards of education, competence, practice and conduct of members of the Institute thereby promoting the interests, standing and recognition of Chartered Members within the industry and wider society.

The Institute was initially founded on 12 February 1965 and was called the Society of Architectural and Associated Technicians (SAAT). We use the font of our original logo on our cover (the ‘AT’) in homage to our history.

In 1986, our name was changed to the British Institute of Architectural Technicians, which in 1994 was then changed again to the British Institute of Architectural Technologists. The Institute held that name until receiving the Royal Charter, in which it changed its name to the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists, which it still holds.

For more about the AGM and our diamond celebratory gala, you can read our coverage of the event on page 18. ■

Heat networks and the architecture professional's expanding role in a net zero future

Words by Neil Fitzsimons, Managing Director, Power On

With the Future Homes Standard on the horizon, architects and designers are no longer simply accommodating heating systems within their designs – they are increasingly instrumental in shaping how heat and hot water are generated, distributed and experienced across entire developments.

Heat networks represent a fundamental shift in the way energy is delivered to buildings. Rather than treating heating as a collection of isolated systems, they invite a more holistic, place-based approach; one that aligns architecture, infrastructure and long-term operational performance. For practices involved in new-build housing and mixed-use schemes, understanding how these networks function – and how design decisions influence their success – is becoming essential.

At their core, heat networks centralise heat generation and distribute it via highly insulated pipework to multiple homes or buildings. This model supports a wide range of low-carbon heat sources, from air and ground source heat pumps to waste heat recovery and future renewable technologies. As the UK works towards net zero by 2050, these systems are expected to replace many traditional gas networks, particularly at scale.

For architects and designers, the implications are significant. Heat networks reward early, integrated thinking. Decisions around site layout, density, building orientation and phasing all influence network efficiency, heat losses and long-term adaptability. A development that has been masterplanned with heat distribution in mind will consistently outperform one where the network is introduced late in the process.

This is where collaboration between designer, engineer and heat-network provider becomes critical.

One of the most critical architectural contributions lies in spatial planning. The location of an energy centre or heat hub should be considered at the earliest stages of design. Its position affects pipe runs, energy losses, visual impact and ease of access for maintenance. Allocating sufficient, well-planned space for plant and distribution equipment is not simply a technical requirement; it is a determinant of whether the network will operate efficiently over decades.

Within individual buildings, similar principles apply. Each dwelling or unit requires space for a heat interface unit (HIU), effectively replacing a traditional boiler. Thoughtful integration of these units – in utility spaces or dedicated plant areas – supports ease of installation,

access for maintenance and a positive resident experience.

Successful heat networks are rarely the result of siloed decision-making. Designers, building services engineers, planners and network operators all influence outcomes, from heat-load calculations and pipe sizing to zoning strategies and user controls. Designers who understand the principles of heat demand, diversity and load management are better placed to coordinate design ambition with engineering performance.

This integrated approach also supports future flexibility. Heat networks designed with scalability in mind can accommodate changes in occupancy, additional development phases or new low-carbon heat sources as technologies evolve. From an operator's perspective, this adaptability is often the difference between a network that merely complies and one that performs reliably over the long term.

While heat networks are frequently discussed in terms of carbon reduction and energy efficiency, their success ultimately depends on occupant experience. Clear controls, transparent metering and consistent performance shape how residents perceive and interact with low-carbon heating. Architecture professionals influence this experience through layout, specification and the intuitive integration of controls within the home.

At a regulatory level, compliance with Parts L and G of the Building Regulations, alongside local authority energy strategies, is now expected. However, organisations such as Power On increasingly work with project teams to look beyond minimum compliance, using heat networks as a platform for delivering resilient, future-ready developments that align policy objectives with real-world use.

As heat networks become embedded in the UK's development landscape, they challenge architects and designers to think at a systems level – balancing form, function, infrastructure, and long-term stewardship. When considered early and designed collaboratively, they offer more than a route to lower carbon emissions. ■



2025 AGM and 60th Anniversary Gala: the debrief

Words by Adam Endacott, Editor

The year 2025 saw the 60th Anniversary since the formation of the Institute and there was no better location to celebrate than in Dublin!

The weekend began with a Friday night social organised by the Republic of Ireland Centre Committee at The Sin Bin Bar in support of the Laois Down Syndrome charity. A band played traditional Irish music; members of which included outgoing Vice-President Practice Dan Clement's sister.

The AGM took place the following day on 21 November 2025 as a hybrid event with delegates in person and attending via Zoom.

The Institute's 20th Annual General Meeting was held in The Goldsmiths Hall in the Radisson Blu Royal Hotel. The meeting saw the approval of the accounts

as well as the authorisation to Council to appoint the auditors. The one resolution was to amend Bye-law 40 to include the aspiration Chair as a Trustee on the Executive Board, which was approved unanimously. These were all voted on by the Voting Delegates, made up of representatives from the Regions and Centres.

The meeting was the last for Gordon Souter MCIAT as Honorary Secretary as he stepped down from the position after fourteen years. He has now set a record in the Institute's books, breaking Karl Grace's twelve-year run. Gordon's wise words, attention to detail, and logical mind will be greatly missed by all on Executive Board and Council. He was thanked for all his support, time and dedication in realising the role. A small gift of personalised cufflinks was presented to him. Cufflinks were also presented to Doug Fewkes MCIAT, who stepped down as Honorary Treasurer last year.

But that wasn't all for bittersweet goodbyes. At the close of the AGM, Eddie Weir formally handed over the role of President to Usman Yaqub. Usman is the 32nd President and the first of the Muslim faith. He is director at Studio Yaqub, a part time member of staff at University of the West of England, and a truly passionate Chartered Architectural Technologist. Eddie was presented with a second Past President medal who made the record books, with a combined total of four years as President, with two as President Elect and now



entering the second term of Immediate Past President. That is eight years of pure dedication and leadership, which is truly remarkable.

Usman said he intended to focus on his manifesto pledges of develop, value, and retain, as well as explore a framework for CPDs, implement initiatives to increase retention and engagement, and enhance the overall value of resources available to members and affiliates. He thanked Dan Clements as the outgoing Vice-President Practice, for his dedication and time in supporting the Practice and Technical Department and being a voice and strong advocate in advancing the work of CIAT. He welcomed the new Vice-President Practice, Adam Newell, and Hywel Davis as Honorary Secretary. For Usman’s perspective on the ceremony, as well as what he’s been up to before and since, see our update from the President on page 14.

Honorary Fellow was presented to Danny Kearney. Danny has been closely associated with CIAT for more than two decades, playing a pivotal role in the development and ongoing success of the Northern Ireland Region and engaging with the Republic of Ireland Centre in recent years. His relentless enthusiasm for the discipline of Architectural Technology and his consistent support for Chartered Architectural Technologists at all stages of their careers have made him a cornerstone of the CIAT community.

Danny’s career reflects excellence not only in his own field of marketing and technical sales but also in his ability to identify, promote, and support the excellence of others in Architectural Technology. He has played a key role in CIAT’s flagship events, including contributing to the success of the CIAT AGM and AT Awards, providing financial support and strategic insight. Danny Kearney is not only an ally of the profession; he is a champion of its future. His energy, generosity, and enduring commitment to CIAT make him a truly worthy candidate for the distinction of Honorary Fellow.



The remainder of the day saw presentations with an update on aspiration by Joe Hyett MCIAT and Sam Lambert MCIAT, high-level updates from Jack Fleming, Policy & External Affairs Executive, a presentation by Marsha Ramroop on her new book, ‘Building Inclusion – A Practical Guide to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Architecture and the Built Environment’, and ending on a message from Keystone by Stephen Ragazzoli, Technical Sales Manager.

The day was rounded off with the 60th Anniversary Celebratory Gala at the historic Round Room at the Mansion House. Eddie Weir welcomed guests and introduced a new film celebrating 60 years, which can be seen on our YouTube channel and included a tribute to George Lowe PCSAAT MCIAT.

Usman gave the main speech after dinner, which reflected on the past and looked to the future of the Institute. After that, membership, speakers, and central office staff danced the night away to a live band, who played lively covers all evening. It was a fitting way to celebrate 60 wonderful years of CIAT. Here’s to 60 more! ■

Gordon’s wise words, attention to detail, and logical mind will be greatly missed by all on Executive Board and Council.



How sustainability is changing the construction of new build homes – and its impact on plumbing

Words by Lee Halstead, Product Marketing Manager, RWC

To meet the growing demand for housing across the UK, the government has targeted the construction of 1.5 million homes over five years.

In a landscape where sustainability is high on the agenda, these new homes provide an opportunity to create efficient buildings that have a minimal environmental impact.

Plumbing and heating systems have a crucial role to play in this journey, with efficient systems helping to reduce energy consumption and conserve water – all while maintaining comfort and reliability to create homes that are fit for the future.

The changes to Part L of the Building Regulations, which came into effect in 2023, outline the specific requirements of plumbing and heating systems in new build properties. At the heart of these changes, gas boilers in new builds must deliver a 92% efficiency, while central heating systems should be sized for operation at a maximum of 55°C.

From 2025, in accordance with the government's Future Homes Standard, gas boilers will no longer be installed in new build low-emission alternatives like heat pumps. For new build properties, adopting these emerging technologies is relatively straightforward as the buildings themselves can be designed to accommodate them.

This opens up the potential for change elsewhere in new homes, including the specification of underfloor heating (UFH). Including UFH in the specification of new homes means that effective systems can form an integral part of the building from the outset. The low operating temperatures of these systems means they align directly with the requirements of today's Building Regulations, placing sustainability at the heart of design.

While these operating temperatures ensure greater levels of efficiency, they also enable designers to deliver homes that are fit for modern living.

When we think of traditional home heating, radiators will probably spring to mind. The problem is that they are energy hungry, requiring high operating temperatures in excess to adequately heat a room. Even then, cold spots are commonplace, compromising both efficiency and comfort. UFH changes this by transforming the entire floor space into a heater, unlocking greater comfort, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and even aesthetics.

With systems hidden beneath the floor, rather than taking up valuable wall space, room layouts can be more flexible, making them better suited to modern living styles. Similarly, UFH systems can be controlled using smart technology, giving occupants full control over their heating and supporting sustainability.

When building sustainability into new homes, the materials used will have a direct impact – not just during construction, but also throughout its decades in use. Selecting materials that can stand the test of time is crucial to long-term efficiency and reliability.

Featuring push-fit technology, solutions like plumbing manifolds can be used to create a central distribution point for hot or cold water, reducing the complexity of pipework and elevating efficiency.

Specifying plastic solutions for new build homes unlocks the potential to create future-proof plumbing and heating systems that prioritise sustainability and user comfort. ■

Supporting the profession: an update from Architects Benevolent Society

ABS is a UK-based charity dedicated to supporting architectural professionals and their families in times of need.



Our work spans welfare rights, mental health, employment and legal advice. Through a highly experienced team of caseworkers, we provide both practical self-guided resources and direct, personalised support.

2025 - 2026

In December, we launched a new welfare model following a successful pilot year. This model introduces a more comprehensive, holistic approach to support focused on lasting impact, recognising that financial difficulty, health challenges, and employment pressures are often interconnected.

In the first three months of our new support model, ABS supported 100 beneficiaries and their families, in addition to those already receiving ongoing assistance. We distributed almost £20,000 in individual hardship grants, helping people through periods of acute financial crisis. Alongside this, we worked closely with 80 new beneficiaries to improve long-term financial resilience, securing around £50,000 in additional income.

Welfare reform: what's changing?

This year brings significant changes to the national welfare landscape, with direct implications for many in the profession.

Universal Credit (UC) 'standard rates' are increasing slightly in line with the November 2025 government budget. Notably, the two-child cap on the child element of UC is being abolished, meaning awards may increase for families with three or more children.

However, there are also cuts ahead. The sickness-related element of UC - covering those assessed as having limited capability for work (LCW) or limited capability for work-related activity (LCWRA - will be cut for new claimants.

From 6 April, most people newly awarded LCWRA will receive £217.26 per month, which amounts to around half of the current rate. Existing recipients will not be affected, but the impact on future claimants is of concern.

If you are concerned about how these benefit changes might affect you, further guidance can be found on our website, or you can speak directly to a caseworker at help@absnet.org.uk.

Employment law: a shifting landscape

The Employment Rights Act 2025 came into force in December and will introduce changes gradually over the next two years. While many amendments will not take effect until 2027, several important measures are already in place.

The Act strengthens employee protections, including enhanced rights around parental leave, sick pay, redundancy consultation, whistleblowing, and workplace harassment.

From April 2026, statutory sick pay will be payable from the first day of illness, and parental leave will become a day-one right. Later reforms will address fire-and-rehire practices, extend employment tribunal time limits, and require employers to take proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment.

By 2027, unfair dismissal protection will apply after six months rather than two years, and zero-hours workers will gain rights to guaranteed working hours from the first day of employment.

While these changes have been welcomed by trade unions and workers' rights groups, there is concern that increased costs for employers as a result of the changes may lead to redundancies or a shift towards self-employed and consultancy roles. ABS will continue to assess how these changes affect architectural professionals in practice.

Looking ahead: our focus for 2026

ABS remains firmly focused on supporting architectural professionals through a period of change. We expect to see increased financial hardship among those with long-term health conditions as welfare reforms take effect, and we have expanded our team accordingly, strengthening our expertise in health and disability-related support.

We will continue working closely with regulatory and membership bodies to ensure a coordinated, informed response to emerging needs within the profession. Social justice will remain a key priority, with renewed attention to equity, diversity, and representation across architectural technology, architecture and landscape architecture.

With thanks to our supporters; none of this work would be possible without our ambassadors, corporate partners, fundraisers, and individual supporters. To find out how to access support or get involved in our work, visit our website using the link below. ■

<https://architectsbenevolentsociety.beaconforms.com/form/254418a1>

[@archbensoc](https://www.instagram.com/archbensoc)

<https://uk.linkedin.com/company/architectsbenevolentsociety>

<https://absnet.org.uk/>



Finding the balance between comfort, cost and carbon reduction

Words by Alex Hill, Managing Director, Whitecode Consulting

Reports suggest around 80% of the UK's current building stock will require energy efficiency upgrades to meet the 2030 Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) standards. Consequently, facilities managers, property developers and architects are under increasing pressure to not only design cost-effective, comfortable and aesthetically pleasing properties but energy efficient and sustainable ones too.



The introductions of the Future Homes Standard (FHS) and Future Buildings Standard (FBS) look set to revolutionise the design and construction of energy efficient new residential and commercial properties. But the ever-changing regulatory landscape and increasing demands of environmentally-conscious tenants and property owners means architectural design and energy efficiency can often be at odds.

Indeed, while building design is a true expression of innovation, style and culture, needing to incorporate energy efficient measures – such as insulation, external shading, ventilation and heating technology – can drastically alter the building's appearance and clash with the desired aesthetic.

While this is perhaps simpler for new build properties – so long as sustainability is a key aspect of the design and implemented early – integrating

sustainable solutions into existing structures presents a tougher test.

For instance, how can they seamlessly blend sustainable materials and systems into the design fabric without compromising the structural integrity and visual identity of the building?

Many across the built environment don't realise how much pressure sustainability and comfort demands put on the building façade. For example, more ventilation requires more louvres. But the amount of available façade space is limited, particularly when planning permissions impose strict aesthetic and acoustic conditions or demand large glazed areas.

Plant equipment also leads to more noise. The result can often be a heightened need to design ventilation openings with attenuators, acoustic ventilation panels or oversized plenum zones.

Additionally, plant is often pushed out of view as designers, planners, architects and property owners don't want to see bulky equipment on rooftops. Instead, they prefer PV panels, landscaped green roofs or roof terraces for residents. While stunning additions to any property, they leave little or no space for mechanical plant, pushing air source heat pumps downwards – often into internal plant areas or basements.

It's important to note that air source heat pumps were never designed for that; they're ideally suited for installations in open air, with free discharge and clean airflow. Conversely, when they are squeezed into enclosed basements, lifespan and performance are compromised and the need for forced ventilation is increased.

Ductwork must also be considered, with any increase meaning more coordination challenges. While larger ducts need more space within floor zones when vertical risers reach façade levels, they create serious clashes with curtain walling, brick detailing or window positions.

While the façade is supposed to be elegant, high-performing and clean, it often ends up being riddled with last-minute additions, awkward penetrations or mismatched louvres. Which could all have been avoided if M&E and sustainable solutions were integrated at the very beginning of the design process.

The issue of overheating buildings isn't going away either; especially in thoroughly urbanised areas. In fact, it's getting worse. Rising external temperatures are pushing more apartments, flats and buildings into overheating risk zones.

Dynamic modelling requirements, such as Part O of the Building Regulations, are exposing overheating problems in ways that hadn't previously been flagged at Stages Two or Three.

Additionally, glazing-heavy designs – often favoured by planners for visual impact and daylight – are amplifying solar gains. A frequent push by clients for more amenities, such as communal kitchens, lounges, gyms and spas, is also increasing internal heat gains and necessitating mechanical ventilation as a result.

Often, the response to this is larger air handling units, the installation of comfort cooling systems and more purge ventilation. As a consequence, cooling loads and air source heat pump capacity are increased, adding further strain on the façade to accommodate it.

While energy efficient technologies are gaining importance across the construction industry, there remains a substantial gap within the architecture professions when it comes to the most efficient implementation of these systems. Additionally, the fast pace of technological advancements means architects and designers must regularly update their understanding and knowledge of new materials, energy-saving systems and green technologies.

Integrating building performance simulation tools into the design process also presents a significant challenge for building designers and architects. While the use of Building Information Modelling (BIM) enables the visualisation of the effect of energy technologies and materials on building design, specialist tools such as this require extensive knowledge and training. Alongside that, innovative technologies can often be expensive and time-consuming to use, especially for smaller contractors with limited resources.

It can also be difficult to compare outcomes across different projects due to the inconsistent results that come from the lack of standardisation in energy performance modelling. As a result, architects and building designers typically have to choose between

competing technologies with limited data and assumptions about their real-world efficacy.

With property owners increasingly aware of their environmental impact and the ever-tightening sustainability regulations and standards sharpening the focus on low-carbon materials and technologies, energy efficiency has become paramount in building design. But efforts to decarbonise UK buildings can often come into conflict with external design, even more so during projects that involve listed or historic buildings.

With that in mind, Architectural Technologists and building designers must look beyond visible and bulky additions and incorporate smarter, less obtrusive energy efficient materials and systems, such as in-roof solar systems or discreet wall insulation, to blend in with the existing appearance while, crucially, improving energy performance.

It is also vitally important energy efficiency, comfort and aesthetics are all integrated early into building design. Without effective planning for the implementation of M&E services and accounting for rising environmental demands, building owners will inevitably keep paying the price in compromised aesthetics, late-stage redesigns and lost performance.

In fact, the early integration of better passive design strategies, such as natural ventilation, daylighting and energy-efficient building management systems (BMS), can maximise the environmental benefits and enhance occupant comfort through more effective use of cooling, ventilation and heating, without compromising on the building's aesthetic appeal.

With finding the right balance of comfort, cost and carbon reduction now becoming a critical aspect of building design, working collaboratively with all involved in a project must now take precedence. Utilising such a cohesive and holistic approach enables all sustainability, M&E, occupant comfort and decarbonisation requirements to be considered equally and reduces the potential for costly rework or adaptations in the future and the associated financial outlay.

For architects and building designers, they aren't now just required to design commercial and residential properties that look great or add real value to any area; they must incorporate sustainable and energy efficient systems and materials into the design to ensure comfortable, healthy and carbon-neutral internal environments. Finding the right balance is now more than just a consideration – it is a necessity. ■

Many across the built environment don't realise how much pressure sustainability and comfort demands put on the building façade.





Delegation visit to Dubai 27-30 October 2025 Middle East and Africa Centre

Words by Dr Noora Kokkarinen, Head of Education, and James Banks, Head of Membership

A delegation visit took place between 27 and 30 October 2025. The delegation consisted of Noora, James, and Dr Colin Stuhlfelder FCIAT, Chair of the CIAT North West Region and Programme Leader of the CIAT Accredited BSc (Hons) Architectural Design and Technology Programme at the University of Salford.

The purpose of the visit met several aims which were to:

- Hold in person Professional Assessment interviews
- Hold an in-person Accreditation visit
- Re-invigorate CIAT's presence in the United Arab Emirates
- Engage with practices and promote the profession and discipline to stakeholders
- Grow the number of CIAT Accredited Programmes in the UAE

The visit was productive and allowed the delegation to better understand the philosophy of construction and preserving the built environment, the rate of construction and opportunity for Architectural Technology professionals wishing to work in such a fast-paced environment to meet market demands.

Professional Assessments

Two separate Professional Assessment Interview Boards were held during the visit. The first took place at Brewer Smith Brewer Gulf where three candidates were interviewed. A meeting after the Board was also held with Mark Vaughan FCIAT and a Senior Partner, to discuss opportunities and our objectives in Dubai and wider region.

Out of the three, two were graduates of CIAT

Accredited Programmes, so it was encouraging to see them and their skills being valued at prominent multinational companies delivering large scale iconic projects across the region.

The second Professional Assessment Interview Board took place at Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) for two members of the Bachelor of Architecture's Programme Team.

Outcomes: the Institute welcomed five Chartered Architectural Technologists.

Lessons learned: The skills of Architectural Technology professionals with 5-10 years of experience are very much in demand in the UAE. The rate of design and construction is much more accelerated.

Accreditation visit

MAHE was due an Accreditation Review visit of its Bachelor of Architecture Programme, which first became CIAT Accredited in 2019.

The visit was Chaired by Dr Colin Stuhlfelder FCIAT with Stephen Denyer MCIAT, Director at U+A Architecture taking part as an industry practitioner.

Outcome: MAHE's Bachelor of Architecture Programme will continue to be Accredited by meeting a time-bound condition, which is for the Programme Team



to expect general arrangement drawings in the last two years of the Programme.

Lessons learned: The Programme is keen to work with more local employers to expand CIAT's reach and influence within the UAE.

Practice visits

The delegation met with Will Plowman, Partner from Foster + Partners, and Nadine Zein, HR Department, Gensler.

Lessons learned: Both organisations would be open to recruiting Architectural Technology professionals in order to assist with the design and delivery of their projects as well as supporting progression to Chartered Membership of their staff.

There was an interest in becoming further involved with local Accredited Programmes in order to recruit graduates from the vicinity.

Visits to educational establishments

The delegation visited Amity University and received a warm reception from Dr Ashok Iyer, FCIAT Associate Professor and Programme Leader of the Interior Design Programme.

In addition to a tour of their well-appointed and resourced facilities, the delegation had an opportunity to speak with Amity University's Pro Vice Chancellor, Professor Rafid Al Khaddar regarding the benefits of CIAT Accreditation and the opportunities for collaboration.

Staff at Amity University are working towards preparing Accreditation in Principle documentation for their four-year Bachelor of Interior Design and their five-year Bachelor of Architecture Programmes. These can be expected in spring 2026.

The delegation met with Harpreet Seth, Head of Architecture, Global Head of Discipline and Shameel Muhammed from Heriot-Watt University. This meeting was facilitated through Allan Lompot MCIAT.

Lessons learned: The UAE's Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research expects that all Programmes have a technical element to them and seek international accreditations, therefore, Programmes which would be unlikely to meet CIAT's Accreditation standards in the UK may be suitable in this part of the world.

Co-badged events with CIOB

Matt Doran, CIOB's Regional Manager arranged a co-badge networking breakfast event, where a presentation was delivered outlining CIAT's objectives now and in the future within the UAE and wider region. Through our

discussion with Matt in the run up to the visit, we also learned that there are many opportunities for the built environment sector in Qatar, Saudi Arabia as well as Bahrain, therefore we will maintain communication to determine whether these countries are worth pursuing as well in order to influence and grow the membership.

At this event, the delegation met with Dr Rana El-Dabaa who is also from Heriot-Watt University and is the Programme Leader of the Bachelor of Interior Architecture and Design, which may also seek CIAT Accreditation in the future.

Similarly, Dr Wael Sheta from the British University in Dubai was in attendance which offers a Masters Programme in Sustainable Design of the Built Environment.

Aylin Round, a recruiter from P&T Architects and Engineers, a well-known industry influencer attended as well agreed to provide content for Institute publications with articles for the membership on how to curate CVs that would be attractive in the UAE job market.

CIOB members and built environment professionals were in attendance and have since followed up regarding membership introduction sessions within their respective organisations, including WSP and Jacobs.

Lessons learned: The expat community and professional institutes are keen to collaborate and facilitate introductions where appropriate.

Visit to RICS Dubai

A productive introductory meeting was held with Geoffrey Dobson, Managing Director of RICS in the Middle East & Africa, who is keen to support and deliver a Professional Institute hub of excellence in the Region including Bharain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia in collaboration with CIAT, RIBA, CIOB, ICE etc.

Discussions also covered opportunities to collaborate and joint endeavours in Africa.

Conclusions

As discussions with the above contacts develop, there may be scope for subsequent visits to the Centre utilising Dubai as the launch pad and base. ■

The skills of Architectural Technology professionals with 5-10 years of experience are very much in demand in the UAE



Confronting competency, codes, capacity, construction products and, yes, costs as a decade since Grenfell approaches

Words by Dan Rigamonti DipArch. Editor, Designing Buildings, and John Smith MCIAT.

Next year will be a decade since the horrific Grenfell Tower fire, an avoidable incident in which 72 lives were needlessly lost, and communities changed forever. The fire and its aftermath exposed serious flaws in almost every aspect of the design, construction and management of housing, from councils to contractors, professions to products, and testing regimes to tenancies. The call for a full public inquiry immediately followed the fire, organisations looked at their own processes, and there was the independent review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety; known as the Hackitt review. The question of how this could happen, quickly moved to questioning the competency, not only of those involved but of the entire industry, and has been the driving message over the past near decade.



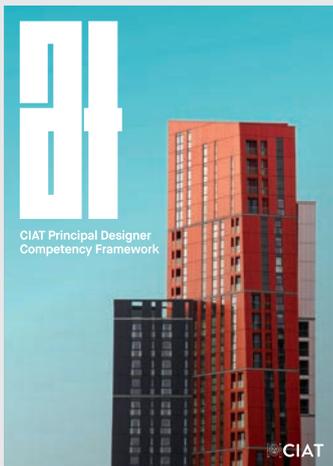
In 2018, the Building a Safer Future report was published, concluding that existing regulatory and competency frameworks were not fit for purpose. Following this, the Industry Competence Steering Group (ICSG) was set up by the Construction Leadership Council (CLC), to define competence requirements for twelve

key industry roles. The Marketing Integrity Group (CPA MIG) was set up by the Construction Products Association (CPA) following criticism of product testing regimes, manufacturers and suppliers. By the end of the year, the Government banned combustible materials on new high-rise homes. The response's focus rightly centred around those responsible for the brief, design, construction and management of buildings, or duty holders, alongside the identification and remediation of other buildings.

Publication of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 1 report was swiftly followed by the Building Safety Bill in 2019, outlining the roles and responsibilities of Principal Designers (PDs), Principal Contractors (PCs) and clients. Finally passed in 2022, the BSA was one of the most significant pieces of legislation for what was seen as a failing industry, though applying its requirements in practice within an often-changing regulatory landscape would prove for many to be anything but straight-forward.

In April 2021, the freely available Flex 8670 ('Built environment. Core criteria for building safety in competence frameworks. Code of practice') was published by BSI as a temporary framework while permanent British Standards were developed, setting the basis for the competence frameworks to come.

In September, the Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI), a voluntary scheme for manufacturers, was published to try to tackle competency from the product side. The Building Safety Regulator (BSR) was also established within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to oversee the safety of high-rise buildings and hold duty holders accountable. In 2022, CPA proposed a construction



product competence standard in its white paper, and in January 2023, BSI proposed its core criteria for a construction product competence code of practice. Most importantly, January 2023 was also when the BSA itself became law. CIOB and RIBA published its Guide to Managing Safety-Critical Elements in Building Construction,

Safety (APS), and the Association of Consultant Architects (ACA) all launched their equivalent registers for Principal Designers. Some were accompanied by PD courses to demonstrate and evidence competency through skills, knowledge and experience. For contractors, CIOB launched its PC Competency Certification Scheme (PCCCS) along with a supporting course.

Naturally, a variety of Building Safety hubs had come into existence via the institutions aligned with the various registers, though a single cross discipline point of reference did not yet exist. In the summer 2024, Designing Buildings, the construction knowledge wiki, with Liz Male and Enframe Consulting, launched the Building Safety Wiki. It aimed to create a free, centralised, searchable Building Safety resource, and a place to share, track and access multi-discipline perspectives and knowledge.

followed by the opening of the RIBA Principal Designer Register in October 2023.

In early 2024, 'A Higher Bar – Achieving a Competence-led Built Environment', the third and final report of the Competence Steering Group, was published, whilst just a few months later, the temporary framework used to develop many of the professional competency programmes (BSI Flex 8670) was replaced by BS 8670-1:2024, which crystalised the original into a formal British Standard.

During the year, CIAT, the Association for Project

September saw the Grenfell phase 2 final report published, which included what it called the web of blame saying, 'my closing is to map out for you who blames whom and for what, and there are three reasons for doing that: legal, cultural and moral'. By the end of 2024, one year after its launch, the RIBA PD register had just 22 architects registered, with the slow uptake

Next year will be a decade since the horrific Grenfell Tower fire, an avoidable incident in which 72 lives were needlessly lost, and communities changed forever.



story similar for other PD registers.

In January 2025, just before introduction of the Procurement Act, the government response to the final Grenfell inquiry, and its Construction Products Reform Green Paper, the development of a Manufacturers Information Hub (MIH) was announced. The MIH's original consortium, which included two companies that had been named in the inquiry, indicated that it 'could address the call for a construction data library', aiming to launch a pilot by the summer, with some funding from an undisclosed government source. In terms of the proposed construction product competence standard or codes of practice that had been proposed in 2022, nothing had at this point come to fruition and been published, but something in the region of 150 companies had by now been assessed under the CCPI.

By the end of 2025, PD registrations with RIBA had increased to 143, with 34 registered with APS, 31 with CIAT and 40 with the ACA, though a publicly available register of PCs who had completed the PCCCS wasn't readily available. Compared to tens of thousands of practising designers nationwide, these remain extremely small numbers.

Importantly, RIBA announced its call for a competence-led approach to architects' regulation and to repeal the Architects Act, with CIAT in turn confirming its openness to reform. The end of the year also saw BSI and ICSG announce the development and pre-registration of its Competence Hub to help engage more professionals, share competence related standards, frameworks, and guidance, and raise issues.

John Smith MCIAT, a practicing Architectural Technologist and qualified and registered PD, is clear in his mind what the most recent developments mean in terms of direction of travel for designers. "Competence in the construction industry has quietly shifted from a professional aspiration to a legal exposure," he says. "The Building Safety Act did not just introduce new roles or processes; it fundamentally changed how responsibility is assigned, evidenced, and scrutinised. Duties are now explicit. Decisions are traceable. And in some cases, accountability is personal."

He goes on to say: "That context is what makes the launch of the BSI and ICSG Competence Hub genuinely significant. Not because it adds another layer of administration, but because it reflects the direction the industry is being pushed toward: demonstrable, auditable competence that can be tested long after a project has completed. Competence now must be provable. Not assumed. Not implied by experience. Not inherited through job titles."

In this last year before a decade of learning the lessons of Grenfell falls upon the industry, have levels of competency improved? Have the registered figures increased? If not, are the barriers being confronted? Are registration figures even a useful measure of competence across the board anyway?

For now, at least, associated higher education fees alone for the required 3-4 years study to enter the profession might run to £10,000 a year (excluding accommodation and living costs); often longer for architects. This is way before any specialist qualification is considered, such as building safety, with costs in the region of an extra £1,000; not to mention the various annual registration fees. Also, at this current point in time, practice fees for architectural work remain only stable. These issues directly suppress entry, progression, and therefore industry capacity. Confronting these costs must be at least one of the routes towards solving the issue.



Competence in the construction industry has quietly shifted from a professional aspiration to a legal exposure.



Moreso, there is the uncomfortable reality that very few practices carry professional indemnity insurance that explicitly covers fire safety critical design decisions, particularly in relation to Building Regulations Part B and the specification of external wall systems. Residual risks will therefore continue to fall back onto the contractor. Furthermore, indication is that very few

specialist fire safety consultants carry professional insurance cover anywhere near that of architects or Architectural Technologists. This means that the status quo remains for many projects to effectively default to Design and Build procurement, with Employer's Requirements increasingly framed around FRAEW outputs, fire authority advice and Part B compliance, rather than being an integrated design responsibility.

On the product side, whilst perhaps more products will be signed up to the CCPI, will it be a significant portion? Are costs also a constraint, especially in the context of the European markets' introduction of product passports and all that goes with them? Are competency standards and registers for other construction professionals, product manufacturers and sales staff likely? Current indication is that 2026 will see the publication of the freely available PAS 2000 – a code of practice for bringing safe products to market – and, later in the year, BS 8670-2 – a code of practice for construction product-related competence – will be published. How will these shape the construction product landscape and the specifiers that dwell in it moving forward?

Increasingly in practice and practicality, the BSA and issues facing design and construction teams has led to specialist manufacturers and system providers producing information for submission to the PD for Building Regulations and the BSR. This is despite those parties not typically carrying design liability insurance for fire safety decisions, with residual risks thus falling back onto the contractor.



Compounding this issue, practices are still routinely being assured that products and systems are compliant, only for detailed technical review to reveal that specific configurations being proposed do not, in fact, meet the stated performance requirements or conditions of use. This might be particularly evident once full system build-ups, test evidence, scope limitations, or installation constraints are examined in detail. Where clients or contractors have already been commercially committed to a system, often on the basis of cost or programme, there can be significant resistance to change, leaving designers and PDs in the difficult position of having to explain why a previously promoted solution is non-compliant. This continues to make the proposals for any construction library, manufacturer or products hub more complex than it is in planning. Whilst proposals continue to focus on the product manufacturer side without looking at specific use cases, such as from the specifier side – and with little or no representation in development – they are unlikely to scratch beneath the surface of the real issues.

More often than is comfortable, specialist subcontractors continue to cite precedent, with “we have done it like this elsewhere” or “this is how it has always been done”, despite the clear shift in regulatory expectations and evidencing requirements following Grenfell. The result is that those raising legitimate compliance concerns can continue to be perceived as obstructive, rather than as merely discharging their statutory duties.

When it comes to construction products reform, a government white paper and consultation in response to its green paper was just published, along with a consultation titled General Safety Requirement for Construction Products. These drip feed outcomes, along with the new standards, should help manufacturers and specifiers navigate forward through the fog. Though some form of universally accessible, standardised and practically useful product library still seems a long way off. It is key that BSR will move toward becoming a fully independent statutory body. But the realities of fragmented allocation of responsibility continues to sit uncomfortably with the conclusions of the Hackitt Review and subsequent government guidance, which explicitly criticised the dilution and transfer of safety-critical design responsibility.

Will there, perhaps through the BSI hub, be the chance for a centralised register of PDs and PCs, rather than it be fragmented by institution as it is now? And how will this marry with RIBA’s current campaign for protection of function as a route to better control in competency?

As it stands, the industry remains constrained by the insurance markets that are largely risk-reactive, rather than aligned with the intent of the Building Safety Act. Perhaps moves towards project-based insurances will be better revisited in this context. For now, though, the absence of an explicit, clearly worded exclusion for fire safety from insurers does not guarantee that such work is covered. There is the continued and strongly advised need for practices to

Practices are still routinely being assured that products and systems are compliant, only for detailed technical review to reveal that specific configurations do not, in fact, meet the stated performance requirements.

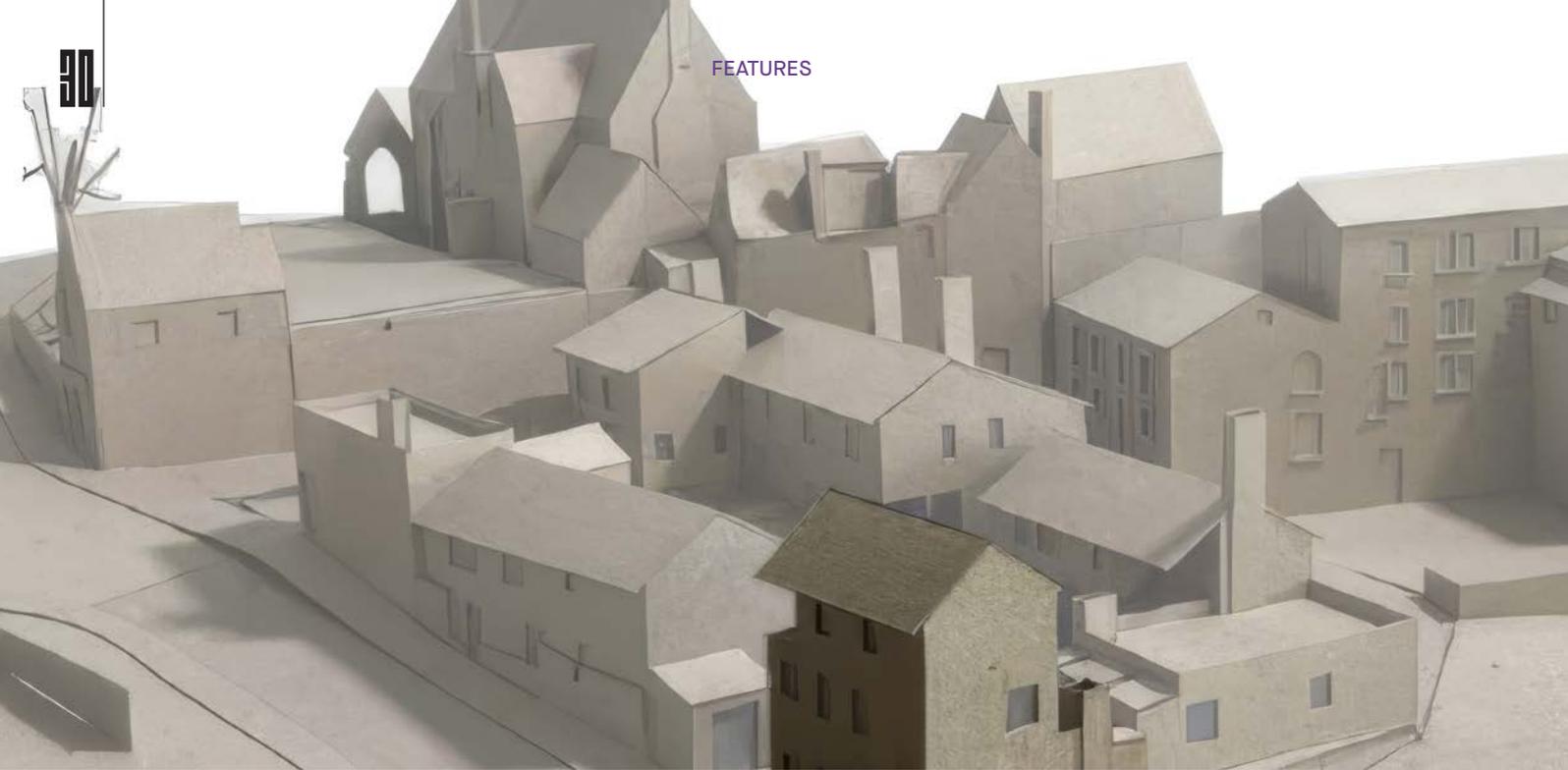


engage directly with their broker to confirm whether their policy provides appropriate cover for fire safety design, product specification, and the Principal Designer for Building Regulations role.

So, time will tell whether 2025 was the year where designers, contractors and clients finally started to shape what competency needs to look like, even if under separate routes. 2026 is the year this will likely expand to fire officers, product manufacturers and sales, but also needs to better expand to insurers and the industry as a whole. Even under the new and overarching umbrella of its newly established independent body, it will be key for industry personnel in offices and on sites alike to share experiences across disciplines and highlight issues in practice. The building safety wiki and the newly launched hub can act as catalysts to capture this, with a view to creating a golden thread of knowledge, not for a single building, but the entire industry.

As we reach ten full years since the tragedy next year, 2026 must be the year to evidence the lessons learned from the decade; that it has amounted to significant change for the better in the built environment and for its users. If this year does not bring fire officers, products, insurers, manufacturers and all others fully on board in the competence frameworks, then 2027 risks becoming another milestone marked by intent rather than evidence. ■





‘The Planning Uncertainty Principle!’ An opinion piece from a small practice

Words by Tony Keller FCIAT, Director and owner, Building Tectonics Ltd

Forgive me if this sounds like I am bashing the planning profession, because it is fruitless to blame an individual profession when the whole industry’s processes and procedures have been created by parliament. However, the system is beleaguered by what I am calling ‘The Planning Uncertainty Principle’. Heisenberg, the particle physicist famous for his Uncertainty Principle, stated that you can know a particle’s position or speed but not both at the same time. Well, he should be so lucky, because with the Planning Uncertainty Principle, as I am calling it, you don’t know the position or speed of your project through the sticky mess called the planning process.

The Planning process is blamed for the delay and increased costs of many projects, and these delays can be quantified by looking at planning statistics. What is not so easy to see and quantify are the number of potential projects that do not get as far as an application. They don’t get that far because of the uncertainties surrounding the ultimate position of the planning department regarding a proposal, and you also don’t know how long it will take to find out. What makes matters worse is the degree of information that is required before a planning department will give an

answer, even a preliminary tentative position resulting from a so-called Pre Application. A Pre Application or even an Outline Planning Application will normally not be considered by a planning department unless accompanied by much the same degree of data that would be required at the full application stage.

So, our nascent client, now briefed by us as to the probable costs involved, in what is really a big gamble, drops the idea and it dies without a trace. If the potential proceeds are large enough and the client can afford to wait it may proceed, but it is the

smaller projects that get snuffed out at this incipient stage, sadly. And this impacts hugely on the workload of us smaller practitioners. There is also the cost to society. There are so many small vacant sites, with good potential, in or on the edge of towns, that could contribute a modest housing supply and moreover, where the housing is needed. This would allow us to get on with what we do best: designing and project managing small scale projects, that add variety and vitality to our neighbourhoods – architectural colour if you like. Instead, we have to get bogged down in trying to navigate the planning uncertainty and explain the madness of the current system to our potential clients.

It is worth making the point that many issues besetting a project are technical in nature and can often be solved with a technical solution (that's what we are good at after all). The exception to this is the one big issue which is not technical, and that is the view of the planning officer or planning committee. It is so often an interpretation of policy in conjunction with doctrine, sometimes even architectural taste, that can be the reason given for refusal. How annoying it is to have produced reams of technical data to support your application to then get a refusal based upon what, to a client, can seem like a whim.

To defer the need for all this expensive supporting evidence would result in many more pre-applications, and then once the dreaded binary 'yes or no' of the planner's decision has been given the client will decide whether to continue with their project or not. As part of central government's attempt to speed up the delivery of homes, the 'Planning In Principle' process (abbreviated to PIP hereafter) was introduced in 2016 and came into effect in 2017. Initially it was for 'Brownfield sites', then its scope was expanded so that non-Brownfield site developments for less than 10 houses were eligible. Then in 2025, further changes were introduced and now we as an industry are being asked to comment on a further raft of changes that could bring to fruition a refined planning process, much like what I am suggesting above. The PIP approach would first assess the viability of a project at a conceptual level, while the more technical matters and minutiae are considered at a secondary stage.

Even though these aspects could yet be a sizable hurdle to development, at least you would know with confidence that an application shouldn't fail because of the more whimsical reasons for refusal.

If PIP is fully implemented, then the decision by a small developer to make an application will be influenced by the cost of making the full application weighed against the net development proceeds. It becomes an arithmetical exercise and not a gamble. We will have certainty – in principle anyway. As to the speed, well, at the initial stage there will be less for the planners to consider so this should be reflected in the speed and cost of the PIP Application. The government is stipulating this should be 5 weeks from an application's validation, although this may not be immune to delays and obfuscation by local authorities as mentioned below.

It is worth noting that, since the introduction of PIP, the take-up of this application type has been pitiful and I suspect from conversations with fellow practitioners that PIP is not widely known about. I would also add that my experience to date is that Planning authorities do not like to have their powers usurped and will use all the reasons they can to claw back their controls. So, the 'small print' to any new legislation is going to be important. Furthermore, if the government is

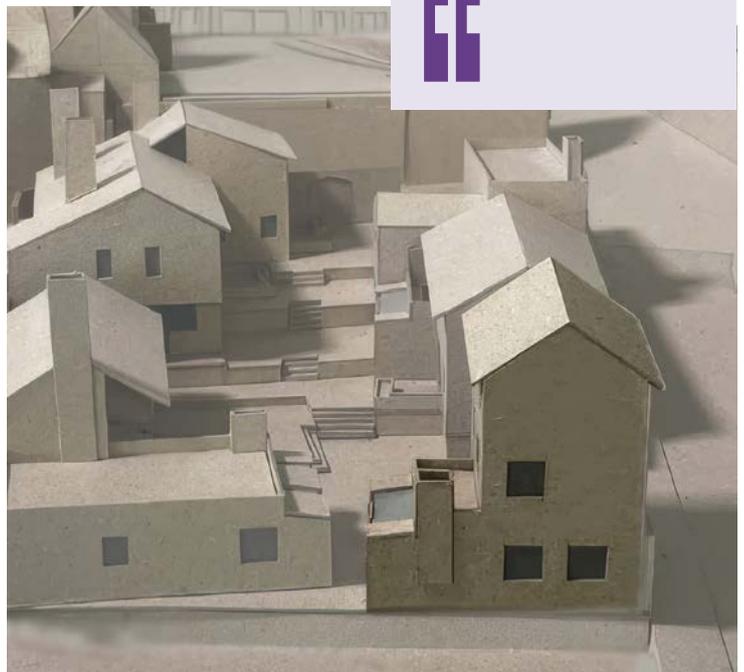
committed to getting Britain building again, as stated in the Planning Reform Working Paper, then allowing planning departments to use their application validation process as a delaying tactic to circumvent shorter application considerations, which frankly we are already seeing for conventional planning applications, must also be addressed.

So many would-be projects never even get as far as a planning application, or even a pre-app, because the initial costs of preparing the submission are so high and the outcome is so uncertain. This failure rate is unknown and unquantifiable and certainly unseen by the government.

This impacts hugely and disproportionately upon us small practices, offering our services to clients wanting to develop a small site in town, or convert a disused commercial building into a dwelling. Clients come to us asking for guidance and in many cases, you have to say that the planning outcome is like the flip of a coin. Once they realise how much it will cost to flip this coin their aspiration can sadly, but understandably, disappear.

We know that the government is proposing changes to the Planning Policy Framework and PIP, and it may be that this will make it easier to get planning permission in towns, especially near transportation hubs. By the time this is published this may already be the case. I hope for such a change, but to be clear, I am not suggesting an "anything goes" approach, as I believe planning controls are necessary. Frankly, it is helpful when managing your client to be able to argue that in order to secure a planning approval, money will have to be spent meeting spatial standards or introducing modelling to the façade. But when it comes to the very principle of whether we can build on a particular site or not, let's get that resolved quickly and efficiently, so that clients can have confidence that it will be worth continuing with the design process. Let's have a principle of certainty and not this lengthy uncertainty. ■

For many clients, the planning outcome is like the flip of a coin. Once they realise how much it will cost to flip this coin, their aspiration disappears.





FEATURES



UK Construction Week London and Futurebuild

In a landmark move for the UK construction sector, **UK Construction Week London and Futurebuild** will come together from **12–14 May 2026**, creating a new national platform for the built environment at Excel London.

The collaborative co-location will form the UK's Built Environment super event, designed to reflect the full scale, complexity and ambition of an industry facing unprecedented change.

Together, the events will bring **25,000 built environment professionals, 600+ exhibitors and 700+ speakers across 10 dedicated stages** under one roof – making it the largest and most comprehensive construction event in the UK calendar.

Two distinct shows. One connected destination

While collaborating closely, **UK Construction Week London** and **Futurebuild** will retain their own powerful identities, communities and curated content, ensuring

clarity of purpose alongside the benefits of scale and connection.

- **Futurebuild** will remain the UK's leading event for sustainability, Net Zero and innovation in the built environment. It will continue to deliver highly respected CPD-accredited content, connecting architects, designers, local authorities and developers with ideas and solutions driving low-carbon construction, circular materials and large-scale retrofit. This leadership is anchored by **The National Retrofit Conference**, a flagship forum for policymakers, housing providers and Net Zero leaders.
- **UK Construction Week London** will continue to champion the practical delivery of construction



projects, bringing a hands-on, solutions-led focus to the industry. The event connects contractors, housebuilders, trades and engineers with the tools, systems and skills needed on site, supported by live demonstrations, immersive features and CPD-accredited content grounded in real-world delivery.

Expanding the materials and finishes offer

Alongside Futurebuild and UK Construction Week London, The Stone & Surfaces Show will also take place at Excel London, adding a specialist focus on natural stone, surfaces, finishes and materials. Its inclusion strengthens the event’s materials and interiors offer, creating new opportunities for crossover between design, specification and installation.

The power of coming together

This collaboration responds directly to the industry’s call for greater cohesion, clearer leadership and more connected experiences, at a time when meeting net zero targets, modernising skills and decarbonising the built environment have never been more urgent.

By bringing together Futurebuild’s sustainability leadership and systems-level thinking, UK Construction Week London’s scale and delivery focus, and The Stone & Surfaces Show’s specialist materials expertise, the co-located event creates a 360-degree experience — from vision and innovation through to specification, materials and on-site implementation.

Martin Hurn, Event Director, Futurebuild, commented: *“This is about creating one connected platform that reflects how the industry actually works – from vision to specification to delivery.”*

“Futurebuild will continue to lead on sustainability and long-term systems thinking, and collaborating with UK Construction Week London enables us to extend that influence into the practical, on-site world, turning ideas into real impact across the supply chain.”

Sam Patel, Divisional Director, UK Construction Week London, added:

“UK Construction Week London has always championed scale, experience and solutions that matter to those delivering projects on the ground. Collaborating with Futurebuild and The Stone & Surfaces Show unlocks new depth and strategic value, creating a destination that is richer, more relevant and more valuable to every part of the built environment.”

Commercial scale. Strategic reach.

Connected opportunity

For exhibitors, the co-location delivers a step change in commercial opportunity, bringing together **specifiers, consultants and sustainability leaders with contractors, housebuilders, engineers and delivery partners.**

Benefits include:

- Expanded reach and cross-sector visibility
- Increased dwell time and more connected visitor journeys
- Stronger alignment between specification, materials and delivery
- Higher-quality leads across fast-growth markets such as retrofit, digital construction, offsite and sustainable materials

One destination. One vision. One future

The UK Built Environment Super Event will serve as the new national platform for innovation, skills and sustainable delivery, showcasing solutions across:

- Retrofit and Net Zero systems
- HVAC, heating and building services
- Circular and low-impact materials
- Offsite and modern construction methods
- Tools, plant and equipment
- Digital construction, ConTech and AI
- Stone, surfaces and finishes
- This is where the future of the built environment connects.

Together, the events will bring 25,000 built environment professionals under one roof, making it the largest and most comprehensive construction event in the UK calendar.



Register for your free ticket with this QR code.

For more information, contact the press team at UKCW@cabcampaign.co.uk

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Construction's sustainability reporting revolution: how tracking upfront embodied carbon via digital tools is reshaping the industry's environmental credentials

Words by Dr Lee Jones, Head of Sustainability, Hubexo

The built environment is responsible for two-fifths of global carbon emissions. In the UK alone, construction generates three-fifths of all waste. These figures have been known for years, yet the industry's response has been decidedly skewed. We have collectively poured enormous effort into reducing operational carbon through better insulation, improved thermal efficiency, modern heating systems and renewable energy. But upfront embodied carbon, the emissions locked into our materials – from their extraction, manufacture, storage and transportation through to installation – has largely escaped scrutiny.



Fortunately, this imbalance is starting to correct itself, and the numbers tell a compelling story.

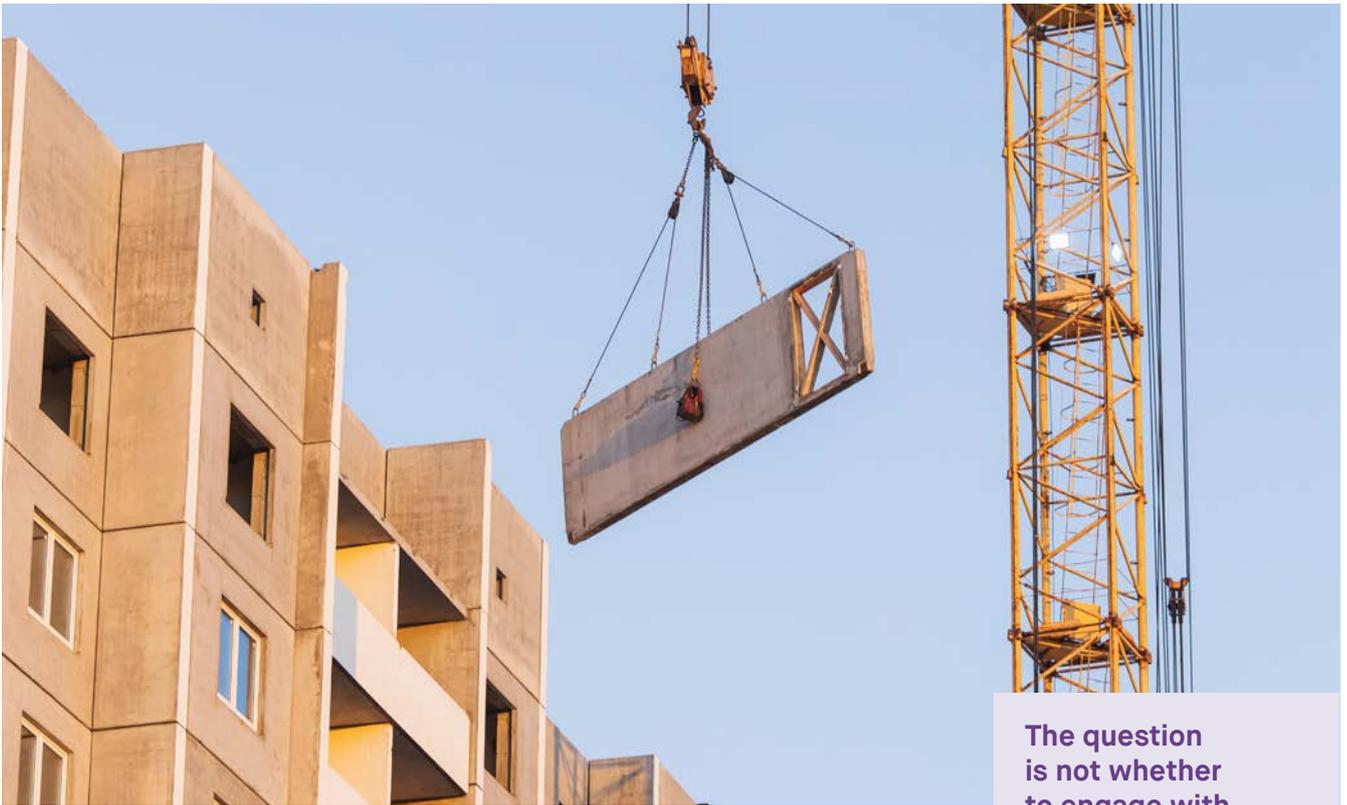
According to the NBS Digital Construction Report 2025, three in five construction professionals now use digital technology to measure upfront embodied carbon,



up from two in five in 2023. Over half the industry has adopted digital tools for lifecycle analysis, a sharp rise from one-third just two years ago. These are significant gains, representing a fundamental shift in how the sector approaches environmental accountability.

The timing matters. Carbon reporting in construction projects is earmarked as one of the sector enablers in the UK Government's Carbon Budget and Growth Delivery Plan ('The Plan'). The Plan sets out how the UK will achieve net zero over the coming years and whole-life carbon assessments for buildings are noted as one of these enablers against Carbon Budget 5, from 2028 onwards. Professionals who master these measurement techniques now will find themselves well-positioned for anticipated regulatory change. Those who delay risk rushing to meet requirements they don't yet understand with tools they haven't learned to use.

But this shift is about more than regulatory compliance. Upfront embodied carbon often represents the largest slice of a building's environmental impact, particularly for low-energy structures where operational emissions have already been minimised. For a typical UK office operating over 60 years, upfront embodied carbon comprises 35% of its whole-life carbon. For energy-



The question is not whether to engage with embodied carbon measurement, but how quickly to build this capability into standard workflows.



efficient buildings, as operational emissions decline, this proportion can reach 75%. Unlike operational carbon, upfront embodied carbon emissions are locked in at construction and cannot be reduced afterwards. For architects and specifiers, understanding this upfront impact is essential to making genuinely sustainable design decisions.

Digital technologies are transforming how we track and manage this carbon. The ability to provide accurate, real-time environmental data throughout a project's lifecycle is increasingly valued by professionals, investors and regulators. These tools enable transparency whilst providing insights to optimise environmental performance during design and construction.

The acceleration is striking. Of the architecture professionals surveyed in NBS' 2025 study, three in five agree that digital technologies are having a positive environmental impact. (A significant increase over the previous survey's findings.) Just one in seven professionals are not using digital technologies for environmental assessments. Conclusion? The industry looks to have reached a tipping point.

For the first time, half of respondents to NBS research believe the construction sector is no longer lagging behind other industries in digital adoption, compared to just one quarter in 2023. This growing confidence reflects a maturing understanding that responsible sustainability reporting and upfront embodied carbon tracking represents a design advantage, not an administrative burden.

Upfront embodied carbon is the foundation for responsible whole-life carbon reporting. Addressing "hidden" carbon unlocks a more complete picture of a building's environmental credentials, not to mention the potential for cost reductions during the operational lifespan of a building. Besides the direct correlation between reducing energy demand and

costs, the selection of products and materials for longevity and reduced service intervals can also demonstrate gains. This typically aligns with the age-old saying of, "what gets measured gets done". Clients may easily look past whole-life costs if they are not presented clearly, and a shift to whole-life carbon reporting, including upfront embodied carbon, can help address that.

The construction industry faces legitimate criticism for its environmental impact. But the data suggests we are moving beyond aspiration and into daily practice. Three-fifths of professionals now use digital tools for energy and water assessment. The systems, the will, and the understanding are all aligning.

The question for forward-thinking practices is not whether to engage with embodied carbon measurement, but how quickly to build this capability into standard workflows. Those who view carbon data as a strategic asset will find themselves with a competitive advantage in a marketplace that increasingly demands environmental transparency.

The revolution in sustainability reporting is well underway. Embodied carbon is finally getting the attention it deserves. ■



Breaking Down the Warm Homes Plan

Words by Jack Fleming, Policy & Public Affairs Executive

On 21 January 2026, the Labour Government published its long-promised, and much delayed, Warm Homes Plan. In parallel, Government also published its Fuel Poverty Strategy, as well as responses to consultations on reforming EPCs and MEES for the Private Rented Sector, and has launched a consultation on the updated Home Energy Model.



This briefing provides a summary of the key measures in the plan, including comparing them to the recommendations from the CIAT policy paper, *Beyond the Warm Homes Plan: A National Retrofit Strategy for People and Planet*.

CIAT welcomes feedback from members and affiliates on the Plan. To share your insights to inform future policy and public affairs activity, please email externalaffairs@ciat.global

What is the Warm Homes Plan?

The Warm Homes Plan is the Labour Government's detailed plan for reducing energy bills, improving warmth in and reducing energy use from existing homes, by supporting the rollout of retrofit measures such as insulation, domestic clean energy generation and low carbon heating. As this policy area is devolved, the Plan outlines measures for England only (though a proportion of the total funding will be distributed to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for devolved

administrations to spend in line with their priorities, through the Barnett Formula).

The Plan was first announced in the 2024 Labour Manifesto, which stated that "Labour will invest an extra £6.6 billion over the next parliament, doubling the existing planned government investment, to upgrade five million homes to cut bills for families." This commitment came on top of previous allocations, meaning that a total of £13.2 billion was initially committed to the Plan. At the 2025 budget, this was increased by £1.5 billion, taking the total funding allocation to £14.7 billion over the parliament (2024-2029).

The Plan was initially scheduled for launch following the Comprehensive Spending Review in Spring 2024. Later the Plan was delayed to October, and then again to the end of 2025 (likely due to the September 2025 change in the Minister for Energy Consumers responsible for the Plan), before finally being published in January.

Plan context

It is widely recognised that the UK’s housing stock is disproportionately old, cold and damp, with a heavy reliance on gas heating. This has significant negative implications, including for the health and wellbeing of residents (with estimates of the cost to the NHS ranging from £900 million to £2.5 billion per year) and contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. As the UK is largely reliant on imported natural gas, it also means that consumers are exposed to volatility in energy prices, as was highlighted by the significant spike in energy costs in early 2023.

While the health, wellbeing and environmental drawbacks of this situation are acknowledged in the Plan, its primary framing is to lower consumer energy bills, in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.

From a political perspective, this approach is understandable. The economy and cost-of-living crisis are regularly among the top issues identified by voters, and it is highly likely that the Labour Government will not be re-elected if the public do not feel better off by the time of the next election. In contrast, reduced carbon emissions are not directly felt by voters, and except in extreme cases, it can be hard to appreciate the links between cold housing and health outcomes. However, this framing does impact on how the Plan prioritises different measures and approaches, as will be discussed later in this briefing.

Summary of CIAT’s view on the Warm Homes Plan

CIAT strongly supports efforts to improve the quality of UK housing, by investing in holistic retrofit measures. The Warm Homes Plan is an undeniably ambitious programme, underpinned by major investment, and Chartered Architectural Technologists are particularly well placed to contribute to, and benefit from this, utilising their expertise in technical design and project delivery.

Importantly, the Plan delivers on many of CIAT’s policy priorities. Firstly, it combines grants for low income and fuel poor households with low interest loans for those who do not meet qualifying criteria and also targets measures at the social and private housing markets. This should ensure that no households are excluded from support to upgrade their homes.

Second, it is largely agnostic as to the nature of upgrades, with funding to support tried and tested measures, such as insulation, rooftop solar panels and heat pumps, as well as more innovative approaches, such as heat batteries and local heat networks linked to new data centres.

Thirdly, it takes seriously the need to rationalise the UK’s complex, fragmented home upgrades landscape. It establishes the Warm Homes Agency as a single point of access and advice for consumers and takes steps to merge programmes over time (such as the Warm Homes: Local Fund and Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund).

That is not to say that the plan is perfect. There are significant failings around holistic, design-led approaches, which mean that the plan will be best suited to delivering retrofits for the most straightforward homes. And further measures are needed to deliver sustainability in the new build and commercial sectors.

Much will now depend on how the plan is implemented, and CIAT will continue to work with government and the sector to deliver a sustainable built environment. ■

This is an excerpt from the Institute’s briefing for CIAT members and affiliates on the Warm Homes Plan. For the full document, please scan the QR code.



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A Multi-Trade Ecosystem Under One Roof

For 2026, InstallerSHOW expands through strategic co-location with the Professional Woodworking Expo and the Painting & Decorating Show, creating one of the UK's most comprehensive platforms for installation and finishing professionals. This reflects how real-world projects are delivered, bringing together the trades that work alongside each other on site every day.

The synergy is powerful. Installers working on kitchens and bathrooms connect directly with woodworking specialists. Those fitting out commercial spaces access the latest finishing techniques. Plumbers, electricians, carpenters, and decorators - all

the disciplines that must coordinate on every project - now converge in one place, creating unprecedented opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing.

Professional Woodworking Expo brings cutting-edge machinery, tools, and materials for woodworking professionals, from individual craftspeople to major furniture manufacturers. The Painting & Decorating Show delivers trusted brands and innovations in coatings, wallcoverings, and application techniques. Combined with InstallerSHOW's strengths in HVAC, plumbing, renewables, electrical, kitchens, and bathrooms, the result is unmatched breadth under one roof.



Four Dedicated Show Themes

InstallerSHOW 2026 maintains clear structure through four themes: HVAC Plumbing and Renewables, InstallerBUILD, InstallerELECTRIC, and Installer Kitchens & Bathrooms. Whether you're exploring heat pump technology, EV charging solutions, or sourcing bathroom products, you'll find focused zones for your specific interests while remaining connected to the broader event.

Global Expertise and Industry-Leading Content

The 2026 edition brings international perspective through the 14th World Plumbing Conference, hosted for the first time at InstallerSHOW in partnership with the World Plumbing Council and CIPHE. This global gathering connects UK professionals with international best practices and emerging standards.

Eleven content streams deliver practical learning across the show floor. The elemental Arena hosts keynote discussions on net-zero solutions. The Climate Solutions Theatre tackles heat pumps and sustainable technologies. The Solar Pavilion showcases renewable energy as it moves from optional to essential.

Free seminars, debates, and panel discussions cover regulatory updates, emerging technologies, business development, and installation best practices - all allowing visitors to curate their own learning journey.

Practical, Real-World Focus

InstallerSHOW's strength lies in its focus on what works on site. Live demonstrations bring products to life. Features like The HAUS explore modern construction methods. TRADES and INVENT initiatives spotlight innovations and challenger brands.

Skills take centre stage through industry partnerships. FITA's live flooring demonstrations emphasise training and standards. The NRFC's roofing competition showcases craftsmanship and emerging talent.

Built With the Industry

InstallerSHOW is developed hand-in-hand with leading trade bodies and professional organisations including NICEIC and CIPHE, ensuring content remains relevant and delivers genuine value. The Bristan Race for Change initiative concludes at the 2026 show, having raised essential funds for water, sanitation, and hygiene projects delivered by charity partner The Cycle.

Why Visit in 2026

With free registration, free parking, and excellent transport links to the NEC Birmingham, visiting has never been easier. The expanded multi-trade format means a single visit delivers broader value than ever before. Whether you're an installer, builder, specifier, or part of the supply chain, the 2026 edition offers more products, more connections, more learning, and more opportunities than any previous year.

The sheer scale creates efficiency. Rather than attending multiple separate events throughout the year, professionals can access the entire spectrum of installation and finishing expertise in three focused days. The networking possibilities alone justify the visit - connecting with manufacturers, discovering new suppliers, meeting potential collaborators, and staying current with industry developments.

For exhibitors, the numbers speak volumes. Feedback from the previous years highlights strong lead generation, quality conversations, and valuable face-to-face connections that can't be replicated digitally.

As David Ventris Field, Event Director of InstallerSHOW, puts it: "InstallerSHOW 2026 is set to be the biggest and best we have ever run. Whether you are an installer, retailer, builder, or part of the supply chain, you will find more than ever to see with record numbers of exhibitors, speakers, and features. Get it in the diary as you don't want to miss it."

From individual tradespeople discovering the latest innovations to major manufacturers sourcing solutions at scale, InstallerSHOW 2026 creates an environment where the entire industry comes together to share knowledge, do business, and shape the future of installation.

Registration is now open using this QR code below. See you at the NEC, 23-25 June 2026. ■



Honorary Officer elections 2026 nominees standing for election

Following the call for nominations in the last issue, each candidate now takes the opportunity to present their manifesto.

Honorary Treasurer



Nominated candidate:
Stacey Taylor MCIAT

I am honoured to have been nominated for a second term as Honorary Treasurer and remain focused and committed to serving the Institute in the best possible way.

I believe that strong financial stewardship is essential to sustaining and advancing the Institute. My goal is to ensure that CIAT continues to thrive as a financially resilient, transparent and forward-looking professional body — empowering members, fostering innovation and enhancing the influence of our profession across the built environment in line with our strategic aims.

My vision

My vision is to strengthen CIAT's financial stability while ensuring that every financial decision supports our members' professional growth, technological leadership and global relevance.

I will focus on:

- Visibility and communication – clear, open communication of financial performance, budgets and long-term plans.
- Sustainability – responsible financial management that supports both immediate goals and long-term ambitions.
- Value for members and affiliates – ensuring that every pound invested by members and affiliates is used effectively to provide tangible benefits.
- Innovation and growth – exploring new income streams, partnerships and digital transformation opportunities to future-proof the Institute's finances.

My commitment

If elected, I will continue to:

- Safeguard CIAT's financial integrity through robust governance, ethical decision-making and prudent investment.
- Enhance accountability by publishing clear, accessible financial reports and engaging the membership in understanding where funds are allocated.
- Support strategic initiatives that align with the Institute's aims — education, professional development and collaboration.
- Collaborate proactively with Council, committees, and Regional representatives to ensure coherence between financial strategy and professional objectives.

The future of Architectural Technology depends on our ability to adapt, innovate and lead. Sound financial stewardship is the engine behind that progress. With your support, I will strive to ensure that CIAT continues to grow sustainably, deliver value to every member and affiliate, and strengthen our collective voice within the built environment sector.

Together, we can ensure that CIAT remains not only financially strong but also strategically equipped to advance the profession of Architectural Technology at every level, no matter what the future holds.

**Strong financial
stewardship
is essential to
sustaining and
advancing the
Institute.**



Vice-President Technical



Nominated candidate:
Dan Rossiter FCIAT

About me

After completing an Accredited Architectural Design Technology programme at Coventry University, I practised at Cardiff City Council, designing new schools as well as the extension and refurbishment of leisure centres and listed libraries. During this time, I took an interest in technical standards, digitalisation, and optimisation. This led me to the Building Research Establishment (BRE) where I developed training, spoke at events and worked with businesses across the globe to support their approach to Building Information Modelling (BIM) as well as represented BRE on standards committees as their subject matter expert. For my efforts, I was nominated and received the inaugural Chartered Architectural Technologist of the Year Award.

In my current role as a Sector Lead at the British Standards Institution (BSI), I provide strategic insights relating to the built environment through my understanding of design, procurement and construction through thought leadership, public speaking and outreach. In addition, I contribute to the development of national, European, and international standards through technical input as well as the convenorship of several international working groups.

Current/previous involvement

Since joining CIAT in 2006, I have actively supported the Institute and the discipline at all levels. Locally, this has included reviving the Wales Region, Chairing both aspiration Wales and the Wales Region, as well as being a Councillor. Centrally, this has included contributing to several taskforces, as well as my current role as Vice-President Technical for the past two terms.

In addition, I have contributed to specific technical questions, consultations and queries. I have been invited to contribute to Government working groups (such as the fundamental review of the approved documents in England), and I have presented on many of these topics on behalf of CIAT at external events and as part of the 'CPD in 43' series.

What you can (continue to) bring to the Institute?

I feel that I bring an externally facing perspective to the Institute. As part of my role at BSI, I engage with professionals across the many built environment institutes and associations. In doing so, I have learnt about their concerns, priorities and how they and their bodies operate, allowing me to see opportunities to work together or to borrow from their successes.

One example has been my work to establish 'societies' within CIAT. An idea inspired by CIBSE, these societies provide a focal point for members and affiliates to discuss key topic areas. Currently we have two societies: Digital and Climate. Another is my ability to leverage my relationships with high-profile professionals, such as when I collaborated with the then President of the Chartered Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors on CIAT's pilot podcast series.

Goals as aligned to the Strategic and Corporate Plan

Our 2025 strategic plan is based upon five aims:

1. Lead and promote safe, sustainable and innovative practice. My societies work has helped provide members a space to lead and share innovative practices. I hope to expand the societies into other areas, such as health and safety. In addition, I hope to empower members to respond to consultations by introducing a 'Consultation Officer' to each Region and Centre.
2. Enhance our value proposition. I am keen to catalyse a review of the practice resources, in collaboration with our Vice-President Practice, to ensure they are fit for purpose. In doing so I hope to incorporate new information sheets, created by the societies, as new and valuable resources.
3. Raise profile and awareness. I'll continue engaging with the sector as I wear my Chartered and Fellow status with pride.
4. Engage and collaborate with external organisations. I'll continue my collaboration with external bodies, institutes, associations and governments.
5. Remain an effective and financially viable Institute. I'll keep my expenses to a minimum!

Why vote for me?

My main goal as Vice-President Technical is to improve members' access to information relating to good practice such as standards, insights and case studies. Two terms in, I have made good progress by establishing societies which will control their own portfolio of resources, including information sheets. I hope that each society will use its ownership of these resources to tackle misinformation and cultivate member-appropriate good practice for the benefit of the Institute as a whole.

Time commitment to the role

Simply put, I've met all of my commitments as Vice-President Technical for the past two terms without issue. I expect this to continue as BSI remains supportive of my desire to perform this role.

I look forward to hearing your views on how I, as Vice-President Technical, can continue to support you, your Region/Centre, and the Institute as a whole. Please feel free to get in touch!

Get to know me!

[in linkedin.com/in/drossiter87/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/drossiter87/)

I feel that I bring an externally facing perspective to the Institute. As part of my role at BSI, I engage with professionals across the many built environment institutes and associations.



President Elect/President



Nominated candidate:
Tom Gray MCIAT

It is a complete honour to be standing again as a candidate for President Elect of our unique and forward-thinking Institute and discipline. Since standing in 2024, I have grown and flourished

within our Institute, gaining greater understanding of the role and preparing myself for this new opportunity.

Now in CIAT's seventh decade, I am looking to build on our past heritage and look to the future, offering fresh ideas and new opportunities for our members through my 'Three Pillars of Promise'.

My professional career journey started with a HNC apprenticeship, progressing to university, where I joined CIAT as an Associate member in 2013, and then as a Chartered Member in 2019. Personal career highlights for me have included the Architectural Technologist of the Year Award from CIAT in 2021, and last year becoming a Partner at my firm. During this time as an Associate member, I believed that one day I would fulfil my dream of serving you, our members. I now feel the time is right.

I am often asked, "what makes you the right candidate for this position?" Well, I am an experienced public speaker with a proven track record of promoting CIAT in an array of public forums. From serving as a facilitator at the world-renowned London Festival of Architecture (LFA), to speaking regularly at Build It Live and Futurebuild. I also often attend schools, colleges and universities to promote the benefits of CIAT. I believe this demonstrates a wealth of experience and ability to engage at a community level, with our membership, other professional and governance bodies, but just as importantly, to new career starters and members. I also chair the South East Regional Committee and the AT EDI Taskforce, as well as being a Professional Interview Assessor for CIAT.

I believe anyone who stands for this position must be prepared to devote their working and personal time to bettering the Institute and pushing the boundaries of our profession, to act as a voice of our membership, and to promote our professional standing to the communities we serve. I am a strong-minded individual who is fair and transparent and always willing to assist, going far above expectations.

As CIAT transitions into the next decade, I have reflected on our history and the achievements we have made, such as the granting of the Royal Charter, our overseas education programmes, growing international membership, and evolving taskforces run by our members.

What are the coming challenges I see with our changing industry?

Naturally there is apprehension around the potential changes in legislation, with protection of title and function of the Architects' Act. Changes in regulation since the tragedy of Grenfell Tower, the housing crisis and the underfunded government planning system to name but a few; yet we are an integral part to these challenging topics, and we should continue having a seat at the discussion table.

How do I envisage serving you, our membership?

Should I be elected, I will serve our membership through my 'Three Pillars of Promise': 'to Promote, to Nurture and

to Serve'. These pillars are integral to my belief of how we can secure and stabilise CIAT for future generations.

Promoting CIAT continues to be pivotal to ensuring the security and stability of our unique Institute. Our members are key to advocating for and educating the construction industry and the general public in the benefits of engaging with Architectural Technologists to deliver safe, sustainable, and memorable projects.

I therefore seek to strengthen our promotional channels by the formation of an 'Ambassador Network' formed from our existing membership, volunteering to serve their Centre or Region. This initiative will function similarly to the already successful aspiration Group, but with the sole aim of promoting the Architectural Technology profession to Regional communities, the wider public, and design and construction professionals. The network will look to further bolster the support of the aspiration Groups to promote CIAT at schools and younger professionals in their regions.

Nurturing our existing membership is pivotal to strengthening our national and global position within the architectural sphere. We must continue to improve and adapt the support to our members, regardless of their professional positioning in our Institute. I would like to see a cohesive approach to working with students and Associate members to progress their professional journeys. This would be facilitated through close collaboration with the existing Membership Department, taskforces, and aspiration Groups. I see these improvements being executed through regular Regional and Centre 'clinics', which will serve to offer drop-in sessions to learn of the benefits and support progressions, whilst also creating a dedicated mentoring programme to aid progression and feed back to the Membership Department.

I promise to serve our membership and ensure that CIAT provides a lifeline to its members. I see this through extending the new Ambassador programme to offer dedicated help and support to individuals. I also intend to rebuild our international membership and provide greater assistance for these members by offering refreshed autonomy and opportunities through a dedicated International Taskforce, to offer a greater voice to our global members.

Importantly, I will also deliver on a new initiative, to highlight mental health awareness and the wellbeing of our members and the wider construction industry. Having suffered with my own mental health illness in 2017, I am acutely aware of the isolating experience they create. Whilst our industry is developing strategies, we need to bolster these further and promote healthier working environments and lifestyles. I see this being offered through our new ambassador programme by providing an invaluable network of support to our individual members.

Furthermore, I will continue to support the outstanding work of the Architects' Benevolent Society, and all they do to support design industry professionals, building on the successes and strides our Past President, Eddie Weir PPCIAT FCIAT, is making with them.

In conclusion, I stand to professionally serve you, our membership, with the delivery of my 'Three Pillars of Promise', 'to Promote, to Nurture and to Serve', should I be elected.

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Nominated candidate:
Patricia Mulvey FCIAT

Engagement, Excellence & Growth – three key principles that would guide my term should I be elected as the Institute's next President.



Who is Patricia Mulvey FCIAT?

First and foremost, I am a Chartered Architectural Technologist. I was born in Northern Ireland in the early 1980s. In 2003, I graduated from the University of Ulster with an Honours degree in Architectural Technology and Management. That was just two years before the Institute was granted the Royal Charter.

I became Chartered in 2007, at the same time the Institute had its first Irish President, Jim Kirwan. I became a Fellow Member of the Institute in 2022. I have spent my working career in small and medium-sized private architectural practices, mostly in the residential sector, working on both small and large-scale developments. In recent years, I obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Energy Efficiency in Design and have a strong background of practice in building performance. My career has taken me from my student days working in Belfast, as a graduate in my hometown in County Tyrone, onwards to Sydney, back to Dublin City, and now as a director in a small practice in County Dublin. If I become elected as President, I will continue within my practice as a Chartered AT.

Experience, engagement and professional growth

I have been actively involved in the Institute since 2017, gaining the experience and professional qualities required to progress to the role of President Elect and President. That year, after attending the Centre's General Business Meeting, I joined the Republic of Ireland Centre Committee and was appointed Public Relations Officer. I have attended every AGM since.

The PR role has evolved significantly during my time, with my primary focus on engagement — connecting with members, affiliates, non-affiliated Architectural Technologists and the wider public. This ability to engage, to listen, and to bring people together is a strength I will bring to the role of President, supporting the continued growth of CIAT and our professional community.

Meaningful engagement goes beyond communication. It involves reaching out directly to members, affiliates and students, supported by targeted social media activity, social and educational events, and high-quality CPD. This approach has contributed to sustained membership growth within the Republic of Ireland Centre and the creation of a strong, inclusive professional community for Architectural Technologists.

My ambition is to work with the Membership Department to help foster this same culture of trust, engagement and growth across all Regions and Centres. Increased awareness and recognition of CIAT and the profession has resulted in my regular engagement with government departments, professional bodies, industry

leaders, educators, suppliers and manufacturers.

As a result, I now represent the Institute through national initiatives, including participation in government-led education and construction forums, collaboration on industry innovation programmes (including building performance, MMC and AI), attendance at careers events, and service as an external examiner and interviewer on Accredited honours degree programmes in Architectural Technology.

Turning engagement into action and growth —

Small actions, lasting impact

This consistent practice of engagement — with our peers, those who look to the Institute for support, and the government bodies we must influence — has provided me with a strong foundation for the role of President Elect and President. Building on the outcomes of the Region and Centre Review, my focus is to promote sustainable growth both nationally and internationally.

Growth begins by bringing people together. We must connect our members across Regions and Centres, encouraging collaboration through shared hubs that support knowledge-sharing, professional development and peer support. Small, practical actions can deliver significant results.

To further strengthen engagement, I propose establishing an annual AT Week, hosted in a different location each year during the spring, filling a gap in the CIAT calendar. This would build on the success of the aspiration weekend of 'connecting, inspiring and exploring', expanding it into a flagship event. While retaining a strong emphasis on students and early-career members, it would also encourage greater involvement from Chartered ATs and affiliates offering guidance, mentoring, or even employment to our leaders of tomorrow.

The aspiration years are years of influence. By capturing the enthusiasm of students and graduates and providing meaningful opportunities to grow their careers, we invest directly in the future strength, leadership and sustainability of CIAT.

Working together to deliver the Strategic Plan 2025

In 2023, I was elected by the Centre Committee to serve as Councillor, representing Irish members and affiliates at the Council Forum. I am now in my third and final year in this role and have served three consecutive terms on the Executive Board as a Councillor Trustee. This experience has given me a strong understanding of how the Institute operates at both Council and Board level, and how the Strategic Plan 2025 has been developed, embedded, and delivered across the Institute.

Through my work on Council and the Executive Board, I have gained valuable insight into how Central Office staff and Departments implement strategy on a day-to-day basis. I have been directly involved in key initiatives, including updates to the new and very successful AT Awards categories, financial budgeting of the Institute under the guidance of the Finance Committee and Department, including

This ability to engage, to listen, and to bring people together is a strength I will bring to the role of President, supporting the continued growth of CIAT and our professional community.



targeted initiatives to re-engage lapsed student members to support membership growth. I have also contributed to engagement with government ministers and professional bodies in Ireland regarding the Architectural Technologists' Register, collaboration with national and international construction organisations, and the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2025.

My Executive Board experience also includes involvement in the Institute's 60th Diamond Anniversary celebrations and AGM weekend, as well as the review and development of future AGM format. I have been involved with the Principal Designer Register and our role and responsibilities under the Building Safety Act; Beyond the Warmer Homes Plan; discussion around the protection of function for architects and Architectural Technologists in the UK, and now we look towards the national Single Construction Regulator role being undertaken. If elected, I will continue to work closely with the Vice-President Technical and Vice-President Practice and their Departments, drawing on their expertise to support members across all Regions and Centres. While no one individual can know every detail of the complex regulatory landscape, my experience of working across multiple jurisdictions has reinforced the importance of technical excellence and building safety. **Excellence remains my second core principle and a priority for the Institute in every country where our members practise.**

Engagement, excellence and growth

I understand that the role of President is to represent members and affiliates and to act as a trusted figurehead for the Institute. I am grounded, approachable and committed to reflecting the views of the membership, while upholding the standards and excellence of CIAT. I am representative of our members — working day to day in practice and actively contributing to the growth and development of the Institute.

I bring a progressive and informed perspective to the role, supported by three terms of experience working closely with the Chief Executive, Executive Board, Honorary Officers, Council, Central Office Departments, and our Centre Committee — I can hit the ground running, and if elected will spend the year in the role of President Elect becoming even more informed of the pertinent issue of the day.

While I cannot make promises that sit outside the remit of the President, I can commit to providing strong leadership, representation and influence. I have the experience to support informed discussion, balanced judgment, and collective decision making. I will lead the team working with Council, the Executive Board and the Chief Executive, implementing the Strategic Plan to ensure the excellence and growth of the AT discipline, the profession, the membership, and the Institute.

Above all, I will continue to engage openly with the membership, encouraging participation, positivity and a strong sense of professional community. I ask for your support because I have been living my manifesto goals long before seeking the role of President Elect/President.

Time commitment to the role of President Elect and President

Since 2017, I have committed significant time to our Centre, to Council and Board activity, actively engaging with members and the wider industry, and supporting the Institute's growth. I have high professional standards. I value excellence. I can prioritise. And I work hard.

If I am lucky enough to be elected as President Elect/President, I will step back from my role as Public Relations Officer within the ROI Centre to ensure my full focus is on serving the Institute and the membership. My priorities will be clear and consistent: engagement, excellence and growth.

What happens next?

Candidates gave presentations at the Council meeting held on 14 March and we encourage you to liaise with your local Regional/Centre committee or aspiration Group about these for feedback and discussion.

There will be an online Hustings held during the election campaign with all candidates on 12 May 2026.

These manifestos were also issued to members and affiliates by email and can be found on our website. A campaign trail is now in progress with the election taking place at Council on 5 September 2026. ■

Key dates summary

Campaigning by candidates

- 2 March – 4 September 2026 inclusive

Election e-alerts and updates on the website

- 2 March – 4 September 2026 inclusive

Election at Council

- 5 September 2026
- Candidates advised if not in attendance at Council

E-alert announcing the election results

- 5 September 2026

Assumption of position

- November 2026 (close of 2026 AGM)



Digital Construction Week

Registration opens for 2026

Ready to explore the solutions to the built environment's biggest challenges? Digital Construction Week (DCW) returns to Excel London on 3-4 June!

Free to attend and carefully curated, Digital Construction Week is where new ideas and technology transforming architecture, engineering, construction and operations (AECO) are brought to life.

What will you find?

- 230+ CPD-accredited seminars across ten stages.
- Hands-on demo's from 150+ exhibitors.
- 9,000+ attendees connecting over shared challenges, for real solutions.

"The atmosphere at Digital Construction Week was palpable," said David John Varghese, Principal Engineer at AtkinsRéalis. "Beyond the impressive software and hardware demonstrations, there was a strong undercurrent of conversation focused on implementation, adoption, and the cultural shifts necessary to make these technologies truly effective."

Karolina Orecchini, Event Director of DCW, comments: "We're opening our doors at a time when AECO's developments are more pivotal than ever. It's the people that make this industry exceptional, and bringing them together to explore and celebrate the advancements we're seeing? That's going to be a real joy."

Healing the industry's pain points

With 150+ brands on display, Digital Construction Week is where breakthrough tech meets real-world application. Confirmed names include 4PS Construction Solutions, Autodesk, Bentley Systems, Bluebeam, Buildots UK, Elecosoft, Glider Technology, Nemetschek, OpenSpace, Revizto and Sage.

"I was struck by the energy, the expertise and the sheer commitment on display to driving better construction outcomes and greater productivity through

technology," said Cliff Smith, Executive Director of the Get It Right Initiative.

Where new ideas are constructed, one seminar at a time

The programme delivers 230+ CPD-accredited seminars across 10 stages, hitting every corner of the built environment.

Covering everything from information management and digital transformation to net zero and autonomous vehicles, with keynotes, interactive sessions and expert panels, the seminars are designed to open the floor to honest discussions and help you tackle real challenges.

Building bridges across AECO

The event serves as the annual meeting hub for AECO innovators from around the globe, so you can meet the right people and strike up relationships that last well beyond the show floor.

And thanks to dedicated meet-up sessions and features built for networking, those connections happen naturally – no awkward hovering required.

"DCW has consistently served as more than just a conference; it's a vital hub for learning, a platform for sharing both successes and setbacks, and an invaluable space for connection," shared David Philp, Chief Value Officer at Bentley Systems.

Andrea Charlson, Managing Director, Madaster, highlighted: "DCW is really important because it brings together a whole range of different people, all unified by one common idea."

[in https://www.linkedin.com/company/digital-construction-week/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/digital-construction-week/)

[@digitalconstructionweek](https://www.instagram.com/digitalconstructionweek)

Digital Construction Week | Excel London | 3-4 June 2026.



DIGITAL CONSTRUCTION WEEK

EXCEL LONDON
3-4 JUNE 2026

INNOVATION
IN THE BUILT
ENVIRONMENT

Register to attend DCW

Join innovators from across AECO to debate, discuss and share ideas to help build a more digitally enabled industry.

DISCOVER

the latest technology to help you on the journey towards digitalisation



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ATJ Policy & Public Affairs Update Spring 26

Words by Jack Fleming, Policy & Public Affairs Executive

As we move into 2026, the attention of the built environment policy landscape is once again being captured by two defining issues: planning and regulation.



Shortly before Christmas, the Planning and Infrastructure Act became law, bringing with it a raft of changes aimed at accelerating economic growth and supporting the delivery of 1.5 million new homes. Key measures in the final version of the Act include:

- Creating a Nature Restoration Fund, to streamline the delivery of Habitat Regulation requirements, by allowing developers to pay a levy used to deliver off-site nature restoration.
- Introducing Spatial Development Strategies and strengthening development corporations, to support the delivery of new towns and other major projects.
- Reforming planning committees to focus on strategically significant developments.
- Limiting legal challenges to major infrastructure projects.
- Modernising processes for compulsory purchase, to improve land supply.

Nonetheless, Government clearly feels these measures are not yet sufficient to unblock housing

delivery. The same week as the Planning & Infrastructure Act became law, a new consultation was launched on further major reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework, including more support for the built out of small sites and new towns, densification around transport hubs and an emphasis on developments that deliver key infrastructure.

These are significant reforms, and CIAT will be responding in depth to the consultation. The Institute is also exploring policy solutions to the UK's housing supply, which is, arguably, rooted in failures of the planning system and the incentives it creates.

The week before Christmas also saw the publication of a tranche of documents focused on regulatory reform, including the outcomes of a review into the definition of higher-risk buildings, the "authoritative statement" of the Fire Engineers Advisory Panel, and the Prospectus for the Single Construction Regulator.

The definition of "Higher-Risk Buildings" will remain unchanged, as residential buildings 18 metres or 7 storeys high or more, excluding secure residential

institutions, hotels, and military/MOD facilities. While consideration was given factoring in vulnerability of residents, the current definition was thought to balance risk mitigation and practical deliverability, and to be reasonably clear and consistent across buildings.

Both the title and function of Fire Engineer will be legally regulated, and the role, functions, responsibilities and competencies of Fire Engineers have been detailed. Government will now proceed with implementing this regulation.

As recommended by the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the Single Construction Regulator will take on building regulation product regulation (following further policy development) and professional regulation, with consultation on a “professions strategy” expected in the spring. The regulator will have operational autonomy, with Government setting policy direction.

Government is clearly eyeing up substantial reforms to professional regulation, and this is being taken seriously by CIAT and across the sector, with various professional bodies setting out their stalls. Last summer, the Institute published a short position paper titled *Safety, Innovation and Diversity in Building Design*, setting out a potential model for oversight of safety critical functions (rather than entire professions), and the Institute will be building on this as we engage with Government and other key stakeholders in coming months.

Elsewhere, progress has been slower. At the time of writing, Government has yet to publish the Future Homes Standard, meaning that building regulations for homes remain, for now, below the standard needed to achieve net zero operational emissions.

On a brighter note, the much-delayed Warm Homes Plan was finally unveiled in late January, following sustained pressure from the sector, including a joint ministerial letter coordinated by the Institute. The Plan will provide a mix of grants and low interest loans for energy saving measures such as solar panels, heat pumps and batteries, underpinned by nearly £15 billion of funding.

CIAT is particularly pleased that the plan is largely technology-agnostic (recognising that each home is unique), includes support for all households (not just those on low incomes), takes steps to rationalise the UK’s fragmented retrofit support market, and recognises the need to grow the retrofit workforce. The Institute would have liked to see a greater emphasis on addressing wider housing quality issues (such as overheating or noise pollution), underpinned by design-led retrofits, as advocated for in our recent report, *Beyond the Warm Homes Plan*. Nonetheless, this is clearly a major step forward in decarbonising the built environment.

A full briefing on the Warm Homes Plan can be found alongside CIAT’s recent policy report, by scanning the QR code on this page.

CIAT has also been active outside England, responding to (among other things) a recent Welsh Government consultation on reforms to part F, L and O Building Regulations, and to a Scottish Government consultation on their draft Circular Economy Strategy. In December, CIAT was also invited to give evidence to the Scottish Parliament Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, as part of their review of Scotland’s draft Climate Change Plan. This was a great opportunity for CIAT to advocate for the importance of green skills, and to improve awareness of the Institute among Scottish Parliamentarians, and we are grateful to Professor Sean Smith HonFCIAT for representing the Institute at the hearing.

The team is always happy to hear from Members and affiliates interested in supporting policy and public affairs work. To get involved, email externalaffairs@ciat.global ■

Government clearly feels these measures are not yet sufficient to unblock housing delivery.



AT Awards 2026 is now open for entries!

Celebrating Architectural Technology at its best, the AT Awards are the premier accolades for outstanding achievements in Architectural Technology.

Entries are open to any organisations or individuals, both within the UK and internationally, that practise Architectural Technology.

The AT Awards 2026 will be an afternoon to remember, with a glossy awards ceremony, food and drink, and many, many movers and shakers from across the built environment sector in attendance. This year, it takes place on 7 October 2026, so save the date!

Why enter the AT Awards?

- To gain industry-wide recognition and reward for you or your practice.
- Your entry will be rigorously judged and peer assessed by a panel of experienced Chartered Architectural Technologists.
- To increase brand awareness and marketing potential with your networks and colleagues.
- To receive unprecedented exposure from CIAT online and in print.



Scan the QR code to enter now
#ATAwards



Categories

Small Project of the Year

- Recognising projects that demonstrate technical excellence realised at a more modest cost. This category may cover anything from small houses and extensions through to retail and unique projects.

New Build of the Year

- Recognising new build projects or schemes that most effectively demonstrate technical excellence.

Retrofit of the Year

- Recognising exceptional retrofitting, where ATs have given new or improved life to a building or infrastructure and demonstrated technical excellence.

Conversion of the Year

- Recognising a conversion project to a building or structure that has demonstrated technical excellence.

Project of the Year

- The award given to any winner across the four categories that is an outstanding example of Architectural Technology, at the discretion of the

The AT Innovation Award

- Recognising vocational research, innovation and delivery in the context of Architectural Technology.

Student Project of the Year

- Recognising a project completed by a student who has demonstrated technical excellence.

Student Report of the Year

- Recognising a report completed by a student in the context of Architectural Technology.

Gold Award

- Recognising an individual who has gone above and beyond with their contribution and commitment to the Institute.

The aspiration Award for Emerging Talent in AT

- Recognising an individual who is a new and exceptional talent in Architectural Technology.

Chartered Architectural Technologist of the Year

- Recognising an individual who has demonstrated and embodied the essence of excellence and professionalism in Architectural Technology.

President's Medal

- Recognising an extraordinary distinction or contribution to Architectural Technology and the profession. It is awarded once in any one Presidential term.



Membership news

Chartered Architectural Technologists

We would like to congratulate the following who successfully attended their Professional Interview and are now Chartered Architectural Technologists, MCIAT:

034131	Gregory Barclay	Northern, 01
035166	Kashish Kalawadiya	Yorkshire, 02
028064	Archana Gemawat	North West
030649	Thomas Tunstall	North West
039512	Emma Clarke	East Midlands, 04
016840	Ian Dick	East Midlands, 04
037792	James Bullock	West Midlands, 05
027295	Mandeep Mattu-Dhillon	West Midlands, 05
027221	Baldeep Shoker	West Midlands, 05
036991	James Pilling	Wessex, 06
026711	Ben Harrison	Central, 08
027405	Lee Slaughter	Central, 08
037451	Isa Cashmore	Greater London, 09
024408	Daniel Onions	Greater London, 09
035010	Thomas Crisp	Western, 12
036719	William	Watts Western, 12
046288	Asifa Noor	Middle East & Africa, C7
046284	Shaghi Sasi Nair	Middle East & Africa, C7

Welcome back

We would like to welcome back the following Chartered Architectural Technologists:

034400	Liam Taylor	East Midlands, 04
007684	David Deakin	West Midlands, 05
032518	Gilberto Viegas	Greater London, 09

Fellow Member

We would like to congratulate the following Member who has successfully completed their application and are now a Fellow Member, FCIAT:

019669	Stewart Douglas	Scotland West, 13
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CIAT-Accredited Conservationist

We would like to congratulate the following Member who has successfully been Accredited as a CIAT-Accredited Conservationist:

030265	Niall Culleton	Republic of Ireland, C2
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We would like to congratulate the following Member who has successfully been recredited for their CIAT-Accredited Conservationist qualification:

021247	Stephen Wardle	North West
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Registered Principal Designer

We would like to congratulate the following Member who has successfully attained their Registered Principal Designer non-HRBs qualification:

018125	Matthew Davenport	North West
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We would like to congratulate the following Member who successfully attained their Registered Principal Designer for HRB and non-HRBs qualification:

034290	Michelle Budd	Northern Ireland, 15
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In memoriam

We regret to announce the death of the following members and affiliates:

007014	David Jarrett	West Midlands, 05
000628	Michael Mellor	West Midlands, 05
000901	Keith Hudson	Central, 08

Exclusive Insurance Scheme For Chartered Architectural Technologists



MFL have been providing bespoke insurance solutions for Members of CIAT for over 25 years.

Key Benefits:

- ✓ Competitive premiums
- ✓ Bespoke cover tailored to you
- ✓ In- house claims service
- ✓ Free contract vetting service
- ✓ Free legal helpline
- ✓ Run off cover

Who are CIAT Insurance Services?

MFL Insurance Group Ltd have worked with the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists for over 25 years to provide the Members with bespoke insurance solutions specific to the work they carry out.

What types of policies and services can you assist with?

We offer a full range of insurance products covering all aspects of the Members business, including a bespoke Professional Indemnity Insurance scheme as an exclusive membership benefit to Chartered Architectural Technologists.

What differentiates CIAT Insurance Services from other insurance brokers or insurers?

Whilst it may be easy to find an "off-the-shelf" insurance policy, these may not accommodate the risks and challenges faced by CIAT Members and could leave gaps in the cover provided.

As a trusted partner of CIAT, we understand your profession and assist CIAT Members on a daily basis. This enables us to maintain a comprehensive understanding of the profession and its unique requirements and provides us with a wider view of the risks, challenges, trends and new developments that may impact you and your business.

Our CIAT facility policies have been developed exclusively for CIAT Members with tailored coverage to cover their needs at competitive premiums.

As there are also a number of pitfalls that could impact on the CIAT Members, new and old, which could prove costly in the event of a claim, it is also important you receive suitable advice. Our experienced insurance advisors are on hand to assist you in ensuring that the most appropriate cover is in place.

What other benefits and services do you offer to Members of CIAT?

Beyond the experienced insurance advisers, we also have an experienced in-house claims team, many of whom have a legal background, who are on hand to support and advise you throughout the claims process. We regularly receive referrals from clients who have had a claim and have appreciated the high standard of service provided by our claims team.

We also offer a free contract vetting service where we can review your contracts in relation to whether they impose obligations which may not be covered by your professional indemnity insurance.

Another benefit provide to CIAT Members is a free legal helpline provided by a high-profile law firm for one-off queries relating to the conduct of your business.

