

# Autumn Statement backs infrastructure

Statement backs HS2 and sees infrastructure, innovation and energy placed firmly at the heart of the economy's future.

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#### ACE AWARDS

New date for ACE Awards

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#### SOCIAL VALUE

Rethinking inclusive economic growth

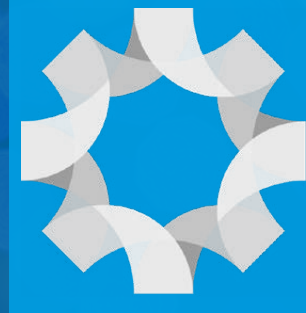
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Time to act on mental health

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# Consultancy & Engineering AWARDS 2022

The Consultancy and Engineering Awards return as an in-person gala evening ceremony at the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square on **Thursday 19 January 2023.**

**Tickets on sale**

<https://www.acenet.co.uk/events/>  
Prices are discounted for those who work for ACE and EIC members, and for those who reserve a table (10 seats).



**The Consultancy & Engineering Awards** celebrate the outstanding achievements of our industry and champion the best people, projects and companies from the world of engineering, consultancy and the built environment.

Uniquely for the industry and judged by the industry, the Consultancy and

Engineering Awards provide a great opportunity to demonstrate leadership, celebrate performance, recognise and reward colleagues, and shine a spotlight on partners.

After two years with few opportunities for the industry to meet face-to-face, they will provide an informal environment for networking and for celebration with clients.

We are excited to share the new host for the evening, technology business editor for The Times, **Katie Prescott.**

**Event informations:**  
Thursday 19 January 2023  
London Marriott Hotel  
Grosvenor Square

[events@acenet.co.uk](mailto:events@acenet.co.uk)  
020 7222 6557  
#CandEAwards2022

**4-7: News**

Mental health, Autumn Statement, ACE Awards.

**8-9: Construction Leadership Council**

Exclusive interview with CLC deputy co-chair Richard Robinson.

**10-13: HS2**

HS2 news round-up, plus Clancy's role as supply chain partner.

**15-19: Autumn Statement backs infrastructure**

Five pages of industry reaction to the chancellor's Autumn Statement.

**20-21: Social value**

Michelle Baker and Peter Masonbrook discuss inclusive economic growth.

**22-23: Mental health**

Karen Brookes describes the importance of supporting good mental health.

**24-25: Inclusive cities**

Maria Kouridou shares her thoughts on designing inclusive cities.

**26-29: ACE & EIC news**

National Highways, Autumn Statement, COP27.

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## Message from the editor



I think it's safe to say that 2022 has been quite a year!

It seems like only yesterday that the industry was welcoming Liz Truss as new prime minister. And what a brief and turbulent reign that turned out to be.

But, onwards and upwards, and new prime minister Rishi Sunak and chancellor Jeremy Hunt managed to calm the markets with an Autumn Statement that placed infrastructure at the heart of the UK's economic recovery.

We have five-pages of leading industry reaction to the statement, as the sector looks to build back better in 2023 and beyond.

Elsewhere, we are delighted to have an exclusive interview with CLC deputy co-chair Richard Robinson, as well as a string of good news on HS2.

Exclusive features on mental health, social value and inclusive cities are also included here, as well as the latest news from ACE and EIC.

Thanks for reading, we hope you enjoy the magazine, and please feel free to visit us online at [www.infrastructure-intelligence.com](http://www.infrastructure-intelligence.com) - where you can sign up for our free twice-weekly newsletter, packed with a mix of news, features and industry opinion.

In the meantime; we would like to wish all of our readers a happy and peaceful Christmas, and we look forward to a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year for everyone.

All the best to all of you, from all of us.

**Rob O'Connor**  
Editor  
Infrastructure Intelligence

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# Pagabo to introduce mental health into procurement

Pagabo to introduce mental health questions into procurement process.

National framework provider Pagabo is introducing mental health questioning into its procurement documents.

The move follows a report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on [Issues Affecting Men and Boys](#), advising more stringent mental health provisions within construction contracts.

Gerard Toplass, group CEO of The 55 Group and Pagabo, has confirmed that despite the construction industry's less than perfect track record on mental health support, things are set to change.

He said: "I think it's a good idea to introduce a mental health narrative into all contracts so that all businesses within the supply chain are asked to demonstrate how they are looking after their people during projects.

"It's important we recognise that all parts of the supply chain carry stress at different times. Contractors are responsible for the majority of the professionals, and no one is denying the difficulty of a long day on site.

"However, those specialising in bidding and pre-construction services agreements, for example, are exposed to a different type of stress that can just as easily boil over into more sustained mental health problems.

"I am confident that integrating provisions



Gerard Toplass, group CEO of The 55 Group and Pagabo.

within procurement documents is one of the best ways to achieve greater accountability."

He added: "During my time in the industry, I have never seen a contract clause with a specific reference to mental health in it – there are good practices and health and safety at work but nothing on mental health.

"At Pagabo we have the opportunity to

champion change and set the standard by crafting high-quality questions to ensure the tender process is more competitive and mindful of staff wellbeing.

"At a senior level, leaders within the industry are leading by example. All the signs are encouraging but there is no time to waste because people need support now."

# Infrastructure backing in Autumn Statement

Infrastructure, energy and innovation emerge at heart of Autumn Statement.

Infrastructure, innovation and energy were placed firmly at the heart of the economy's future as chancellor Jeremy Hunt outlined his Autumn Statement on 17 November, with firm commitments to major infrastructure projects including HS2 and Sizewell C included in the keenly-anticipated speech.

Unveiling his plan for "stability, growth and public services" Hunt said the government's key priorities for economic growth would be energy, infrastructure and innovation.

Making commitments to infrastructure investment he said: "If a modern economy needs secure, clean and affordable energy – it also needs good roads, rail, broadband and 5G infrastructure. Such connections allow wealth and opportunity to spread."

He said while capital was sometimes seen as the "easy option" for cuts, doing so "limits not our budgets, but our future". He said the government would not be "cutting a penny" from capital budgets in the next two years.

Hunt also confirmed commitments to major rail infrastructure projects including HS2 to Manchester, the Northern Powerhouse Rail core network and East West Rail.

He said the new Sizewell C nuclear plant will go ahead. Subject to final government approvals, the contracts for the initial investment will be signed with relevant parties, including EDF, in the coming weeks.

Plans for the second round of the Levelling Up Fund were confirmed, with at least £1.7bn to be allocated. He also



Chancellor Jeremy Hunt has delivered his Autumn Statement. Image courtesy of GOV.UK.

confirmed a new hospitals programme and a gigabit broadband rollout.

And to unlock more growth, Hunt said more "inspirational local leadership" was needed.

A new devolution deal will bring an elected mayor to Suffolk, plus there will be deals to bring mayors to Cornwall, Norfolk and an area in the north-east.

Hunt also said that cheap, low carbon, reliable energy must sit at the heart of any modern economy. While calling Britain a

"global leader in renewable energy" he said the UK needed "to go further" with a major acceleration of home-grown technologies like offshore wind, carbon capture and storage, and nuclear.

See pages 15-19 for leading industry reaction to the Autumn Statement.



[Click here to read a full version of this story.](#)



# Industry survey raises fears on economy

ACE survey sees 86% of leading industry figures describe inflation as an operational concern.

A member survey by the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE) has revealed significant business concerns as a result of economic uncertainty in the months ahead.

The snap member poll, which was published ahead of the Autumn Statement by new chancellor Jeremy Hunt, revealed that 86% currently view inflation as an “operational concern”.

Client confidence (79%) and wage inflation (71%) also topped the list of business concerns, ahead of higher energy costs (40%) and price increases from suppliers (36%).

Half of respondents (50%) are unsure whether the construction industry will remain resilient and cope with the levels of uncertainty in the economy, with just over a quarter (26%) of members having either “significant concern” or “some degree of concern” that their business will be able to cope.

To weather the current economic storm ACE members have considered a range of interventions, including wage increases for staff (62%), price increments for clients (57%), as well as driving efficiency and cost cutting where possible (38%).

Stephen Marcos Jones, CEO of ACE said: “From our survey, it is clear that the current macroeconomic situation is causing major concern for many of our members with a large degree of economic



Stephen Marcos Jones, CEO of the Association for Consultancy and Engineering.

uncertainty affecting business confidence, at a crucial moment when we are expected to make the investments which will deliver our net zero future.

“An assured programme of projects from the public sector will drive growth and support jobs across the UK, with positive knock-on effects on private sector confidence, while delivering political ambitions around economic growth and jobs.”

“Our members stand ready to work closely with government at all levels to help

make this a reality.”

Survey respondents reflected a wide range of ACE’s membership base. Together, ACE member companies employ 250,000 people around the world, including 60,000 in the UK, directly contributing £15bn to the UK economy a year.

ACE member companies play a key role in the design, delivery and management of the UK’s national infrastructure and built environment, playing a vital role in helping to achieve the UK’s net zero ambitions.

# High-profile editor to host Consultancy and Engineering Awards



Times business technology editor Katie Prescott is set to host the rescheduled Consultancy and Engineering Awards on Thursday 19 January.

**Times business technology editor Katie Prescott to host rescheduled awards evening on Thursday 19 January.**

One of the UK’s best-known business journalists has been confirmed as the new host of the rescheduled Consultancy and Engineering Awards on Thursday 19 January.

Katie Prescott is a familiar voice to millions of listeners after a decade reporting for the BBC, including high-profile roles as the senior lead business presenter for Radio 4’s Today Programme and a business correspondent across BBC News on TV, radio and online.

She’s now the technology business editor for The Times and a weekly columnist for the newspaper’s award-winning business section.

Organised by the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE),

the keenly-anticipated Consultancy and Engineering Awards had to be rescheduled due to planned nationwide rail strikes by the RMT on the original date of Thursday 3 November.

The rescheduled ceremony will now take place on Thursday 19 January 2023, in the same venue, the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square.

The awards, which return as an in-person ceremony following last year’s online event, celebrate the outstanding achievements of our industry and champion the best people, projects and companies from the world of engineering, consultancy and the built environment.

Looking forward to the event, Prescott said: “I’m delighted to be hosting the next Consultancy and Engineering Awards. The sector has a huge role to play in creating a more sustainable future for us all, which is why I can’t wait to join you to celebrate the inspirational people, innovative projects and brilliant companies which will deliver it.”



**NEW DIARY DATE:** Consultancy and Engineering Awards: **Thursday 19 January, 2023.** London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square.

**BUY NOW!** [Click here](#) to book the last remaining tickets.

*The Consultancy and Engineering Awards 2022 headline sponsor is [BECG](#). Infrastructure Intelligence is media partner for this event.*



# Opportunity to drive industry forward, says CLC deputy co-chair

**Richard Robinson champions change as the Construction Leadership Council publishes new strategy. Karen McLauchlan reports.**

**T**he UK's construction sector has an "incredible opportunity" to push forward change, according to Richard Robinson, the Construction Leadership Council's deputy co-chair.

Speaking exclusively to *Infrastructure Intelligence*, the comments came as the CLC announced its [new strategy and priorities](#) for the next three years.

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic,

the CLC has become increasingly visible as a leading voice for the sector, working in partnership with government. Supporting companies through the crisis and responding to key short-term challenges, it has also set a plan for transformational change.

Robinson, CEO UK and Europe at Atkins, took up the post as the CLC's new deputy co-chair in June alongside Mace Group chairman and CEO Mark Reynolds as the

CLC's new industry co-chair.

The CLC now plans to focus its efforts on four long-term ambitions for transformational change - net zero and biodiversity, next generation delivery, building safety and people and skills.

It is also recognizing more immediate pressures that are challenging the industry and will work on mitigating impacts of inflation, ensuring confidence in the forward pipeline to invest, managing delivery risks and focusing on business sustainability and insolvency.

Following the period of post-Covid recovery, Robinson says the construction sector now has huge opportunities for change, development and growth.

"The CLC did great work during Covid," he said. "It brought the industry together, working with key associations and industry bodies. I think the CLC found a momentum and togetherness for the industry that we'd not found before."

"We focused on keeping construction going, keeping sites open and keeping people in work. Both Mark and I are keen to

build on that and use this momentum that the CLC has.

"Our four key strategic priorities are pointing CLC's work into the longer term. But it could be suggested that the current situation around issues such as inflation and energy costs is as big a challenge as Covid was for the industry - which is why we have short-term priorities as well."

***"We will continue to be right on the front foot for the whole of the industry."***

The issue of people and skills is a key focus for CLC, with problems on industry training and recruitment already well documented across the board.

"We need to be clear on how the industry tackles skills needs collectively going forward," said Robinson.

"We are looking to define, evidence and model our future skills needs, and that will allow us to have a more informed conversation about the range of initiatives that are needed to meet the demand in the industry."



**Richard Robinson, deputy co-chair of the Construction Leadership Council.**

Robinson added that it was also important for CLC to continue working with other trade associations and bodies.

"If you've got something you're passionate about and your trade association or business wants to put time and effort into moving it forward then it's an open door to the CLC and for people to help."

"We will take industry issues, concerns and priorities and where we can flag those to government, we will advocate strongly on behalf of industry where there is enough alignment to do so."

As the CLC launches its new priorities, where does it see the sector at the end of the next three years?

"There is a lot to do in terms of next generation delivery. My personal hope is that we use the point we're at to transform productivity in the industry through the application of digital technology."

"That's certainly not just big companies, I want us to connect the whole industry together. Our challenge with productivity is always our very long and fragmented supply chain and being able to address this digitally is an incredible opportunity for us."

And on taking up the post at CLC, Robinson says it's the opportunities that now present themselves to the industry that are the biggest attraction.

"Our overarching message is to take the CLC into a new era for delivery and that was the big attraction for me. I could see the opportunity, I could see that industry was at a point with how it was working together that we could transform the industry along those four priority lines."

"Our industry has a massive impact on the economy overall, on jobs, on prosperity, on productivity and we are at a time when there's a lot of positive momentum - there are some significant headwinds now, but challenges can be turned into opportunity."



The CLC plans to focus on four long-term ambitions for transformational change - net zero and biodiversity, next generation delivery, building safety and people and skills. Photo by Benjamin Elliott on Unsplash.



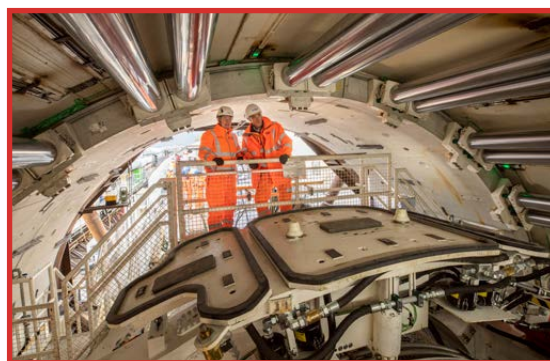
# Construction continues apace on HS2

Construction continues apace on HS2, with thousands of workers busy at hundreds of sites from the south-west to the north-west.

Plus, there was good news for the high-speed rail project in the recent Autumn Statement as chancellor Jeremy Hunt confirmed commitments to major UK rail infrastructure projects including HS2 to Manchester.

**Karen McLauchlan** takes a closer look at some of the HS2 stories that have been making the *Infrastructure Intelligence* headlines.

For regular news, updates and features on HS2, check our website every day at [www.infrastructure-intelligence.com](http://www.infrastructure-intelligence.com)



During October two tunnel boring machines got to work in London. The first, named Sushila, started work and was then followed by a second TBM, named Caroline. They will tunnel for 22 months non-stop - except for Christmas Day - towards Greenpark way in Greenford, boring five miles of the twin-bore Northolt Tunnel.

[Click here to read more.](#)

HS2 launches second tunnel boring machine in London to start five-mile journey beneath the capital.

In September dramatic photos and video captured the night-time transportation of HS2's Long Itchington Wood tunnel boring machine's giant cutterhead in Warwickshire. The intricate operation was managed by the plant and logistics team at HS2's contractor Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV).

[Click here to read more.](#)

Giant HS2 cutterhead makes journey to start second dig in Warwickshire.



News came that the contract to build HS2's eco-friendly Interchange Station in Solihull, awarded to Laing O'Rourke, is set to support around 1,000 jobs over the next five years. HS2's Interchange Station will be the catalyst for huge growth plans in Solihull, creating an economic transformation for the region. The plans, being led by the Urban Growth Company, will support 30,000 jobs, up to 3,000 new homes and 70,000sq m of commercial space.

[Click here to read more.](#)

Laing O'Rourke have been awarded the contract to build HS2's Interchange Station in Solihull.

More UK businesses were urged to register their interest in becoming an HS2 supplier as the company launched a new supplier guide. HS2 said firms of all sizes could access the multi-million-pound pipeline of contract opportunities with HS2's construction partners. Construction of the first phase of HS2 is expected to generate around 400,000 contracts, with an estimated £25bn worth of opportunities expected to flow out into the wider supply chain over the coming years.

[Click here to read more.](#)

HS2 launches new supplier guide.

HS2's enormous spoil conveyor began operation in West London. The 1.7 mile-long network of conveyors will move more than five million tonnes of spoil excavated for the construction of HS2. The use of the conveyor will remove the need for one million lorry movements from roads in West London, reducing traffic congestion and emissions in the local area.

[Click here to read more.](#)

Conveyor will remove one million lorry journeys from London roads.

HS2's construction partner, Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV), was recently recognised for its diversity and inclusion best practice. BBV was awarded the Clear Assured Gold standard accreditation for its commitment to embedding inclusive best practice into all elements of its work. HS2 set the standard when it achieved Platinum status – the only company in the UK to do so – in February 2021.

[Click here to read more.](#)

HS2's construction partner, Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV), has been recognised for its diversity and inclusion best practice.

In early November HS2 said its workforce had almost hit the 30,000 mark. The latest update showed more than 2,300 people joined its ranks in the last three months, with the rapid pace of construction seeing more people working at its stations, viaducts, bridges and embankments. HS2's workforce is now busy at 350 sites.

[Click here to read more.](#)

HS2's workforce has almost hit the 30,000 mark.



# Delivering a safer, more efficient culture along the supply chain

The scale of HS2 as a mega-project involves multiple strands of a wide and varied supply chain. **Brendan Anderson** outlines an example of Clancy's role as a supply chain partner.

**M**ega-projects such as HS2, with 250 miles of high speed railway planned throughout England, inevitably require vast, intricate and diverse supply chains.

Though it may not be what many first think of when picturing HS2, managing existing water and energy networks are a complex and essential aspect of the wider project delivery.

This is particularly true in busy urban environments, where existing infrastructure and often historic foundations have to be carefully considered.

One such example is around London's Euston station where Clancy has been a major partner in helping HS2's Enabling Works Contractor, Costain Skanska joint venture (CSJV), manage the crucial utility diversions needed to keep the UK's biggest infrastructure programme on track.

Alongside CSJV, Clancy has been working on a critical wastewater diversion at Harrington Street in the London Borough of Camden which was part of works to allow the extension of the HS2 tracks.

The job involved exposing the existing Victorian brick egg sewer and introducing 120 metres of new pipework four metres deep along the nearby street network.

## Keeping the pressure up

Delivering in a living, working neighbourhood brought an extra challenge as the live flow of the sewer needed to be maintained at all times during the job. Any disruption risked delay which in turn would impact the wider programme of works across the area.

Close, collaborative working between Clancy and CSJV was essential to make sure that the sewer works kept tightly to schedule. It was by building and maintaining a culture that continually challenged the standard ways of working and constantly looked at how to reduce the time needed on a project that ensured success.

The original design for the ground excavation, for example, was complicated

and involved a significant and time-consuming concrete pour in stages. Clancy approached its design partners with proposals that would remove the need for the concrete pours, cutting our proposed schedule by fifteen days.

Stakeholder engagement was also a key factor in staying on track. The site location sat on an emergency service route, meaning that the default approach to construction would require ongoing demobilisation of works in sections that allowed continued vehicle access.

By working with the local London Fire Brigade, Clancy was able to identify alternative emergency routes, allowing work phases to be undertaken concurrently and significantly cutting down the schedule for delivery.



Clancy has been a major partner in helping HS2's Costain Skanska joint venture (CSJV) manage the crucial utility diversions needed around London's Euston station to keep the UK's biggest infrastructure programme on track.

## Safety first

While sticking to the programme timeline was a priority, safe working of course remains paramount and a number of tools were deployed in this project to promote a strong health and safety culture on site.

Working with excavation brings inherent risks of trips and falls, so the team introduced the Sledge Safe edge to the project – a heavy barrier system which can't be moved by hand.

The tight, urban environment that the work took place in also needed to be considered and usual techniques and equipment reassessed. By investing in EAVE active hearing protection – ear defenders with a microphone on the outside and a speaker inside – workers were safeguarded from loud noise, while remaining able to hear at a healthy decibel and be aware of their surroundings.

Following positive feedback from site workers, these will now be rolled out across other Clancy projects.

## Mapping the network; looking to the future

Intervening in existing networks brings challenges but also opportunities for the future. Improving the safety of future works, the team also used photogrammetry technology to image the excavated areas, creating three-dimensional models of the utility connections.

The result of this is that future workers will be able to know exactly what's in the ground before digging, reducing the risk of service strikes while keeping teams safe and minimising potential disruption for the residents and businesses on Harrington Street.

The scale of HS2 as a mega-project involves multiple strands of a wide and varied supply chain, and each link in that chain has an important role in delivering a pioneering programme of transport infrastructure for the country.

Through engaging local stakeholders, championing a culture that consistently seeks more efficient ways of working and embracing technology that puts worker's safety at the forefront, Clancy is able to play its part not only in the new railway, but in the future of a safer, highly-skilled infrastructure sector.



**Brendan Anderson**  
is operations director, capital projects, at Clancy.



# MPs highlight national security risks to critical infrastructure

**MPs call on government to get a grip on national security climate risks on critical infrastructure.**

A committee of senior MPs and peers has implored the UK government to get a proper grip on the major national security risks posed by the effects of climate change on critical national infrastructure, such as power, water, transport and communications.

The Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, gave several examples of the effects of severe weather in a damning report: [Readiness for storms ahead? Critical national infrastructure in an age of climate change](#).

The cross-party committee, chaired by Dame Margaret Beckett, said there was overwhelming evidence that climate change is already having an impact on UK infrastructure.

It is also clear, according to the committee, that no minister has been taking responsibility for adapting UK infrastructure to the effects of climate change. Their report suggests that this reveals an extreme weakness at the centre of government.

Despite these risks, the committee found very little 'join-up' between the various CNI sectors, and no formal mechanism for collaboration or information sharing on their interdependencies.

Dame Margaret Beckett, chair of the Joint Committee, said: "There are plenty of examples of the extremely serious impact that climate change has already had on our critical national infrastructure. And there



**MPs have called on the government to get a grip on national security climate risks on critical infrastructure.**

are bound to be more in the future – almost certainly more serious still.

"But the thing I find most disturbing is the lack of evidence that anyone in government is focusing on how all the impacts can come together, creating cascading crises. There are simply no ministers with focused responsibility for making sure that our infrastructure is resilient to extreme weather and other effects of climate change.

"Storm Arwen showed how quickly the effects of a power shutdown can impact on other sectors. People were left without any

access to their landline phones after the storms, and unable even to call emergency services in areas with a poor mobile signal. These cascading crises are a major danger to the functioning of the UK economy, and to society – that's why this is a serious risk to national security."



[Click here to read an extended version of this story, including reaction from the National Infrastructure Commission.](#)

## Cautious industry welcome for chancellor's Autumn Statement

Statement sees infrastructure, energy and innovation placed firmly at the heart of the economy's future. See the following four pages for a selection of leading industry comment, including ACE, Atkins, Ramboll, AECOM, WSP, Turner & Townsend, EngineeringUK and CECA.



# Cautious industry welcome for chancellor's Autumn Statement

Leading industry figures have given a cautious welcome to the **Autumn Statement** on 17 November, which saw infrastructure, innovation and energy placed firmly at the heart of the economy's future.

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's statement outlined firm commitments to major infrastructure projects including HS2 and Sizewell C, in a keenly-anticipated

speech that helped calm financial markets and industry fears after the brief and turbulent reign of previous prime minister Liz Truss.

Here, in a longer read than usual, is an essential selection of leading industry reaction that landed here at *Infrastructure Intelligence*:



**Stephen Marcos Jones,**  
CEO of the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE), said:

"It will come as no surprise that the chancellor presented a challenging macro-economic picture, and with tax increases previewed in the media over the last few weeks, today's tax announcements have already had time to be digested by the business community.

"I wrote to the chancellor outlining the importance of investment in infrastructure to deliver the jobs and growth that will help drive the economy through the challenging times ahead. With this in mind I was pleased to see the government maintain the capital programme, which means the Northern Powerhouse Rail core, HS2, and the new hospitals programme can all progress. ACE also welcomes the commitment to new energy infrastructure in Sizewell C.

"As important was the news that devolution deals have been struck for Suffolk, Norfolk and Cornwall, as well as increased powers for the Combined Authorities in West Midlands and Greater Manchester. Increasing local decision-making is crucial if we are to make real progress on levelling up across the UK, but we would have liked to have seen the government use this opportunity to consolidate and ringfence spending, rather than introduce another round of competitive funding.

"We were also pleased to see a new focus on innovation for investment zones. While it may impact councils that initially expressed an interest, we look forward to seeing what can be made of these initiatives.

"We were, however, surprised to see road duty on EV vehicles raised and it does raise broader questions around the long-term viability of the current system which relies on fuel duties to fund road investment. ACE has long argued for reform in this space, and we look forward to engaging with government departments on the issue."



**Richard Robinson,**  
Atkins CEO, UK & Europe, said:

"The government has acknowledged that investment in critical infrastructure is vital to rebalance the UK's regions and meet net zero commitments.

"Projects such as HS2 and Sizewell C will provide us with greater energy resiliency, greater connectivity and greater opportunities across the UK, and we welcome the decision to stick to long term commitments which will help deliver growth and give industry the confidence it needs to plan ahead and invest in people and skills.

"As our recent research confirmed, it is vital that we level up people as well as places, ensuring investment delivers improvements in infrastructure but also wider social value.

"We now look forward to a period of stability and getting on with the important work which needs to be delivered across the UK."



**Hilary Leever,**  
chief executive at Engineering UK, said:

"We need a well-funded education, skills and careers system to ensure that we have enough engineers, scientists and technicians to achieve the government's ambitions for net zero and energy independence as confirmed in today's statement – along with 'superpower' status in science and innovation.

"We cautiously welcome the announcement on education spending made today. The Autumn Statement suggests that the government understands the financial pressures that the education sector is experiencing. Only by investing in the future of young people will we be able to tackle the chronic and increasingly acute skills shortages across the economy, and in particular in the engineering and technology sector, that are threatening companies' ability to grow.

"We look forward to working with Sir Michael Barber on the implementation of the government's skills reforms. The engineering and technology sector is crying out for more skilled people and to ensure this we need T Levels to be a success and falling apprenticeships numbers to be addressed.

"We would welcome a broader look at the education system and hope government will work with stakeholders to develop a STEM skills strategy and identify any further reforms needed to ensure that we have an education system able to deliver on the UK's ambitions."





**Patricia Moore,**  
UK managing director at Turner & Townsend, said:

*"There will be a sense of relief today from those who feared cuts to capital spending. The chancellor's commitment to a pipeline of much-needed rail and nuclear investment in particular brings certainty that can allow these schemes to continue in earnest. But the reality of inflation means that government departments will need to do more with less.*

*"Growth doesn't need to be expensive, but it will fall to our industry to ensure that we are efficient and targeted despite the pressure on resources. Focusing investment in the right way to build skills and expertise, and driving opportunities across the nation, including key schemes in the north, and priority areas like life sciences, advanced manufacturing and green industries, will be essential.*

*"Digitalisation has a huge role to play in transforming performance and efficiency, recognised by the chancellor as he spoke of the UK becoming the next Silicon Valley - and our sector needs to heed that call.*

*"We welcome the further £6bn of planned investment in the mission to reduce the UK's energy consumption, and the taskforce to retrofit the UK's homes, offices and public buildings. The strategic approach taken to retrofit, already exemplified by the successes of the existing accelerator schemes, can set an example of how targeted spending can stimulate private investment and innovation. They bring benefits to the country and the climate, all without breaking the bank."*



**Alasdair Reisner,**  
chief executive of the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA), said:

*"In recent months CECA has campaigned to ensure the continuation of existing programmes of investment. The chancellor has today confirmed that our message - that cutting capital spending would ultimately be counter-productive for economic growth - has cut through in Whitehall.*

*"While we recognise the extremely challenging nature of the UK current fiscal position, nonetheless we welcome the government's recognition that cutting investment in infrastructure would not only harm growth but would cost jobs and negatively impact businesses and communities.*

*"We call on the government to work with industry to redouble efforts to accelerate growth in the short and medium term, so that potential future cuts can be mitigated.*

*"We are now exploring the government's commitments in greater detail to ensure that the agenda on which it was elected in 2019 - that of levelling up the economy and investing in the infrastructure the UK will require in the coming years - remains in place, even in the context of the difficult choices the chancellor has had to make today.*

*"The UK government has today said that it has confidence in the infrastructure sector to deliver growth. CECA members stand ready to deliver on this ambition, and we look forward to working with our members and government at all levels to secure the economy, deliver the recovery, and return UK plc to economic growth as quickly as possible."*



**Jim Coleman,**  
head of economics at WSP, said:

*"Though the measures outlined in the Autumn Statement clearly reflected the challenging economic situation in the UK, it was positive that the chancellor recognised the essential focus on education that is required to keep the UK at the forefront of innovation and deliver economic growth.*

*"Building a workforce with the skills ready for our green future will be critical to our economic recovery; indeed many of the growth priorities highlighted in the Autumn Statement rely on green jobs and utilising new technologies, so additional funding for schools to invest in skills and strengthen employability is an important step forward.*

*"Investment in transport infrastructure allows wealth and opportunity to move around the country and connect communities, so it was also pleasing to see the chancellor give the green light to a number of major projects. All opportunities to harness innovation and growth the length and breadth of the country must be taken to drive productivity through the difficult years ahead."*



**Colin Wood,**  
AECOM chief executive for Europe and India, said:

*"We all understand this was a budget delivered at a time of extreme economic pressure and, in the words of the chancellor, unprecedented global headwinds.*

*"Against this backdrop, the announcement that High Speed 2 to Manchester, core Northern Powerhouse Rail and East West Rail will go ahead demonstrates a long-term commitment to infrastructure and growth. At AECOM we welcome these announcements and will work with our industry peers to ensure value, sustainability and accelerated delivery of these projects.*

*"The chancellor's commitment to net zero and honouring the COP26 agreement should also be commended in these challenging times. Investment in renewable energy is a win-win as we target energy independence and efficiency.*

*"The green light for the Sizewell C nuclear power station and renewables, such as wind and solar, will enable our sector to build on our technical know-how and support the high skills, high wage workforce of the future.*

*"We are already working with clients on building decarbonisation and the Energy Efficiency Taskforce (EETF) funding is much needed as a 15% reduction in energy consumption requires significant investment.*

*"Ultimately, infrastructure investment is all about outcomes. We don't build for the sake of it, we build to enable people and goods to move around in a way which benefits communities and the economy.*

*"AECOM believes local leaders, in partnership with their communities, are best placed to make these decisions and welcome today's support for new mayoral devolution deals and 'trailblazer' devolution deals to give increased fiscal powers to established mayors.*

*"Let's now use this focus on stability, growth and public services to get on and deliver these projects - the sooner we do, the sooner people and communities will benefit from them."*



**Philippa Spence,**  
managing director, Ramboll UK, said

*"This budget has given us confidence in the outlook for our sector in 2023, despite the many headwinds. I welcome the chancellor's ongoing commitment to the Glasgow Climate Pact, his decision to enable growth through increased investment in renewable energy, and to stick with key infrastructure projects and the levelling up agenda.*

*"Combined with the commitment to enabling innovation in digital, life sciences and green industries amongst others, there will be sighs of relief in boardrooms across the country. Instead of the austerity we feared we potentially have a strong platform for growth.*

*"In particular, ending electrical vehicles' exemption from road tax is the right thing to do as vehicles of any kind carry costs - such as direct costs for roads - which should not be borne by only a percentage of road users. However, I believe there also needs to be a recognition of the ability of taxes to result in behaviour change and benefits of having less vehicles on our urban roads. In isolation, I doubt that this tax will result in reduced demand for electrical vehicles.*

*"However, there was no mention of a just transition or skills requirements to deal with the climate crisis or allow our economy to take the opportunities it may provide. The fact is, local authorities do not have the resources or knowledge to be able to adequately tackle the climate issues they are facing and urgently need more targeted funding from the national government to plug the skills gap. The devil will be in the detail for the government's climate commitments and investment in infrastructure."*



[Click here](#) to read a further selection of industry reaction to the chancellor's Autumn Statement.



# Rethinking inclusive economic growth

**Atkins' Michelle Baker and Faithful+Gould's Peter Masonbrook** explore inclusive growth and attracting new talent to the industry.

The language surrounding social value is still evolving, and there's a great deal of confusion around what it means especially when we see terms such as inclusive economic growth.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, (OECD) 'Inclusive growth is economic growth that is distributed fairly across society and creates opportunities for all', while the UN states, 'sustained and inclusive economic growth can drive progress, create decent jobs for all and improve living standards'.

It's about creating social equality through job creation and the mobilisation of economies that will have a positive impact on communities and society on a local, national and international level. If you're achieving inclusive growth, you're adding social value.

Before we can move towards inclusive economic growth in any meaningful way, it's clear education and training is needed right across the sector, at every level.

## What does inclusive economic growth mean for the engineering sector?

It's clear we need to bring investment to the industry by targeting individuals from more diverse backgrounds.

Huge transformation projects like those tackling the climate crisis will dominate in the coming years, and to successfully execute them, we need all types of skills, and all types of people.

For the engineering and construction sectors to champion inclusive economic growth, the key starting point is to connect with the people and communities in which we are working to really broaden our

reach, across cultural, socio-economic, educational and generational divides.

As well as intensifying our focus on engaging with young people, we need to concentrate our efforts on communities with high levels of deprivation, high levels of unemployment and low levels of skills.

These two sections of society are where we can create the biggest growth, generate the most social value and most importantly, make the best positive outcomes.

## How can we achieve inclusive economic growth?

A successful approach to inclusive economic growth in the sector relies

upon the effectiveness of collaboration, communication and investment of both time and money, as per the 'levelling up' agenda.

As part of our joined up approach at Atkins and Faithful+Gould, we tap into the knowledge and expertise of community organisations and local charities to help us connect with hard-to-reach sections of society, or those who may not engage in dialogue with engineering and built environment businesses directly.

These community groups have some great contacts who they work with and who they trust.

They're able to connect with locals one-to-one and explain the work in a way we cannot. With their help, individuals are

empowered to see how they can transfer their existing skills and build new ones, to support themselves and the wider community.

A lack of diversity among new recruits to the sector shines a light on the near exclusive use of traditional recruitment techniques across the industry – and no doubt across many similar professions.

We need to rethink how we work with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to find out exactly what students want from a career, and the sorts of communication they engage with best.

Young people are looking for a different type of career and have different priorities than they did thirty years ago; they're looking for green jobs and digital jobs that align with their values and skills.

The engineering remit is huge. We have exciting green and digital jobs in droves. We're at the vanguard of climate resilience, we're instrumental in driving down emissions and we're transforming the built environment – all to make the world a better place.

We have what young people want, and we need people with all kinds of skills and from diverse backgrounds to contribute to our important vocation. The issue is, people don't know about engineering.

We need to showcase the full range of roles we offer and highlight how we are making a difference. We need to challenge preconceptions and engineering stereotypes, and make working with us accessible and attractive to all.

The built environment sector needs a makeover, starting with an evolution of the industry's public image through targeted and effective communication strategies that get the right messages to the right people.

To propel inclusive economic growth into business as usual, the whole sector needs to up its game and harness its collective power to work better and smarter through collaboration.



**Michelle Baker**

is associate director of social value at Atkins,



**Peter Masonbrook**

is head of social value at Faithful+Gould



Young people are looking for a different type of career and have different priorities than they did 30 years ago; they're looking for green jobs and digital jobs that align with their values and skills.



# Celebrating changemaking

Sir Robert McAlpine director *Karen Brookes* describes the importance of open, honest conversations about mental health and the importance of having wellbeing support at work.

The theme of this year's World Mental Health Day was 'Make mental health and wellbeing for all a global priority'.

The importance of this is something we all know to be true – and yet, in our industry, sadly, perhaps we know it more than most.

Stress, anxiety and depression are responsible for nearly a third of all work-related illnesses in our industry, but the scale of stigma surrounding conversations about feelings and mental illness in construction is still significant.

Clearly, the industry retains something of a macho image. Earlier this summer for example, mental wellbeing charity The Samaritans had to release a statement in defence of builders speaking about their feelings following an article ridiculing them as 'woke'.

The issue should be a pre-eminent concern for us all, and World Mental Health Day offered a reminder of the importance of open, honest conversations about mental health and the importance of having wellbeing support at work.

It was also a chance to amplify and normalise those essential initiatives being employed across the sector that are making a lifesaving difference to individuals, their families and their colleagues.

## Bringing support within the firm

It goes without saying that mental health is a complex landscape and it requires expert knowledge and training.

## Construction Industry Helpline

UK 0345 605 1956  
ROI 1800 939 122

The Lighthouse Club is a construction-specific charity that provides a helpline, support and training to construction workers and their families.

The difficulty for many is accessing, or knowing where to look for that knowledge and training.

Workplace schemes, such as mental health first aiders, provide that first accessible port of call to individuals needing support. The first aider represents a qualified person to speak to and can also act as a signpost to any further support an individual may need.

There is no one size fits all approach to mental healthcare, and initiatives such as [Acting Out Productions](#) offer a more experiential approach to mental health training. Team members are empowered in their knowledge of mental health and how to support their colleagues by acting out real-life scenarios.

We have been working with Acting Out Productions at Sir Robert McAlpine, and it has boosted our team's confidence in identifying signs of struggle and how they can provide support.



Mates in Mind trains the skills and confidence to address the stigma of mental health in the workplace.

Like Acting Out Productions, there are a number of other great third-parties that can support our businesses to turn the tide on construction's mental health crisis.

Charity [Mates in Mind](#) trains the skills and confidence to address the stigma of mental health in the workplace and [The Lighthouse Club](#) is a construction-specific charity that provides a helpline, support and training to construction workers and their families.

Businesses should look to their own initiatives too. *Don't Keep it under Your Hard Hat* is a campaign we have been running at Sir Robert McAlpine to encourage more conversations around mental health.

Safe spaces have been created on site

for all to access and discuss anything playing on their mind, whether related to the workplace or personal life.

These conversations are difficult to begin of course, and perhaps uncomfortable to hold. Yet by making them more commonplace, each individual opening up about their fears and worries is changing the stigma about mental health and changing lives.

Amidst the uncertainty, stress and grief of the pandemic, businesses should also ensure they have reflected on its lessons and developed business practice in line with the new world of work.

Rightfully so, employees have found a new

voice to call upon their firms to allow flexible working practices that can balance their careers with family responsibilities, a social life, hobbies and taking care of their physical health.

These evolving practices, such as flexible hours, location, or days of the week, are supported by employees across the board as an initiative that would help them manage their mental health – 84%, to be exact, according to a survey from FlexJobs.

## It's time to turn the tide

Much like our mental health itself, it is important to take the time to reflect on the

wonderful schemes and organisations seeking to change the mental health crisis. You never know who it might reach.

So, if you are a business, take note and take action, and if you are an individual suffering, know there are people out there to listen and places to turn to for support – and this time next year, let's reflect on how far we have come.



## Karen Brookes

board director, people & infrastructure, at Sir Robert McAlpine.



# Inclusive city making: an opportunity, not a burden

Jacobs' *Maria Kouridou* discusses how we can take a more inclusive approach to the design of our cities to create better outcomes and value for all citizens.

Inclusive cities for people is not a new concept. Cities and places face many challenges around urbanisation, climate change, political instability, health and wellbeing, digital and physical infrastructure.

However, inclusive design has gained increasing attention recently from cities and organisations across the globe highlighting that for tomorrow's cities to provide opportunities for all, it's essential to understand that inclusive cities involve multiple spatial, social, environmental and economic factors.

Coming out of a pandemic that challenged not only our global health systems but hit the most vulnerable communities the hardest, deepening existing inequalities, now is more vital than ever to follow an outcome-based approach putting social value at the core and turn the toughest challenges into opportunities that support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and drive benefits for all.

Using evidence-based research to identify best practice from global cities and Jacobs' Inclusive City Making

framework, a strategic design tool that promotes the delivery of integrated design visions, can help us take an inclusive approach to the way we design cities.

## Governance and decision making

We hear a lot about smart cities, but we need to think about kind and safe cities too. Improved gender equality in several EU countries is expected to lead to an increase in GDP of about 12% by 2050 (European Institute for Gender Equality in the EU, 2020). Ultimately, gender inclusion is not a burden or a problem. It is an opportunity.

We now know that following a holistic and integrated approach from the building to the street, the neighbourhood, the city and the region, we can drive benefits and address issues of accessibility and diversity.

Many cities are taking concrete actions, adopting gender inclusion strategies that deliver targeted measures across different scales and with a significant spatial impact, while also bearing considerable socio-economic benefits.

For example, Vienna has carried out more than 60 pilot city projects that have used gender mainstreaming in urban design establishing a strong focus on quality of life and equal access to social facilities for all.

## Urban design action areas and interventions

Pulling the thread from the fact that women make up for approximately 50% of the global population and that traditionally cities have been designed by men, it's critical to study how different groups of people experience the same space differently and what could be an appropriate inclusive urban form.

Realising that diverse initiatives promote inclusive design we need to take inclusive design beyond accessibility concerns to embody inclusion in its widest form in all design processes and different project stages for better outcomes for all.

Design interventions targeted to women also benefit wider citizen groups, and can be organised in seven key urban action areas:

### Seven key urban action areas for design interventions.

**New Ways of Living, Working and Wellbeing:** Promoting healthy urbanism multi-functionality through diversity and mix of uses.

**Public Realm, Accessibility and Safety:** Allowing for flexibility and appropriation to tackle inequalities and social isolation.

**Climate and Biodiversity:** Promoting design interventions and strategies to achieve a resilient, net-zero future.

**Consultation and Digital Engagement:** Adapting participatory methods to be more appropriate and welcoming and integrating digital infrastructure.

**Social Sustainability and Education:** Raising awareness and providing access to education. Key Performance Indicators can help designers and policy makers measure the impact of design projects and guide future ones at various stages across different sectors.

**Governance and Decision Making:** Highlighting the importance of the process and encouraging and engaging women and girls to participate more.

**Mobility Networks:** Prioritising pedestrian movement and safe active travel through activating the streetscape and integrating transport networks.

### Safety and participation

We now know safety and participation in all processes are crucial to gender urbanism – urban design can help ease the burden of caregiving for women and promote their safety in the public realm.

In Brazil 97% of the women said that fear of violence makes women change their routes in cities or stops them from being

able to work in certain places.

There can be no gender inclusive city without gender inclusive processes. Women have different roles in our societies and built environment design needs to consider their needs and encourage their involvement in city making.

With active collaboration and engagement, gathering data, use of technology, and putting sustainability and

resiliency at the core of design thinking, a gender inclusive city is a city that embraces diversity and difference. It's a city that offers choice and accommodates for all users.



**Maria Kouridou** is head of interface management at Jacobs.



Taking a more inclusive approach to the design of our cities would create better outcomes and value for all citizens. Photo by Sawyer Bengtson on Unsplash.



# Net zero guide to working on roads



**ACE publishes guide for consultancies delivering road projects and programmes.**

ACE has published a new guide aimed at supporting consultancies which deliver roads. The member-only document explores how businesses can turn challenge into opportunity as the UK continues its journey towards net zero by 2050.

Outlining a key role for consultancies in supporting clients to decarbonise the design, construction and maintenance of roads, it also highlights the important role in re-thinking the how transport systems are planned and operated to deliver improvements for mobility within increasingly tight emission budgets.

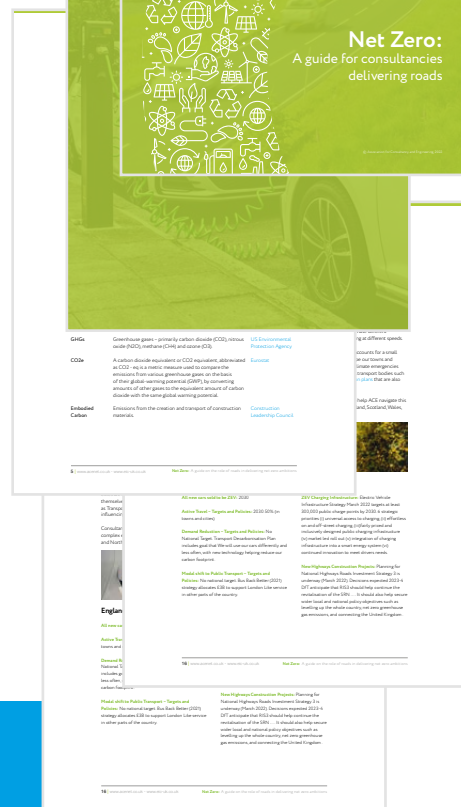
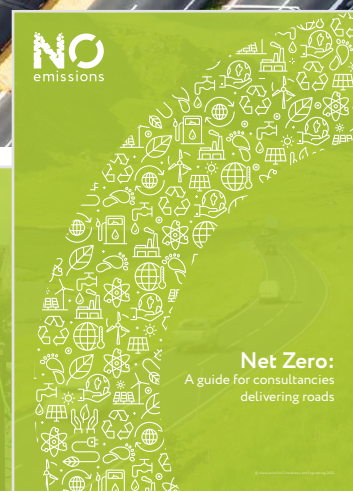
Highway engineers – and similar – will need a broader package of sustainability skills to allow them to deliver roads, including expertise to assess the impact of design choices on new environmental, social, and economic criteria for success. Consultancy businesses will also have to grow their capabilities in a number of areas including placemaking, intelligent mobility and road user charging schemes.

Featuring detailed case studies on the approaches from members Arup and Ramboll, as well as overviews of the policy situations in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the guide has been designed as a one-stop shop for any member working in road management, design or delivery across Great Britain.

Commenting on its launch, **Tim Chapman** (Arup), chair of ACE's transport group said: "With expertise across transport planning/strategy, project appraisal, engineering design, placemaking, highway adaption for zero emission vehicles, for walking and cycling, and carbon management and measurement, our industry is uniquely placed to deliver roads and streets that will also positively contribute to society's net zero goals."



[Login to the ACE website and download your copy today.](#)



## In conversation with National Highways

**Replay our webinar with head of biodiversity at major client.**

ACE welcomed Laurence Lewis Jones, principal environmental advisor – head of biodiversity at National Highways to present his organisation's current approach and work on biodiversity to members.

With more than ten years experience as an environmental and policy advisor,

ecologist, and researcher, he delivered an informative presentation exploring issues such as National Highways' environmental sustainability strategy, net gain commitments for biodiversity, their own biodiversity fund, and what makes a for holistic road projects which encompass biodiversity goals.



[Replay the webinar online now](#)



## Replay: fresh perspectives



**ace Emerging Professionals**

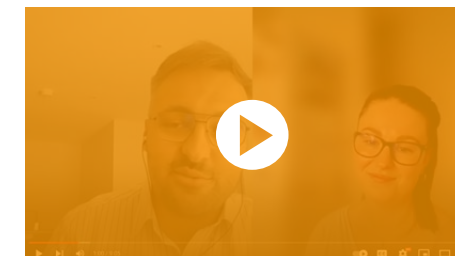
**Webcast from ACE's Emerging Professionals returns.**

Fresh Perspectives, the popular ACE Emerging Professionals webcast, has returned for a second season.

Bringing together two emerging experts to discuss the major issues facing the next generation working in the built environment, the second season will focus on career pathways in our sector, discussing key influences, organisational barriers, and sharing personal experiences.

New episodes of the webcast will be shared every Wednesday on the ACE Emerging Professionals LinkedIn page. [Make sure you don't miss out by following the page.](#)

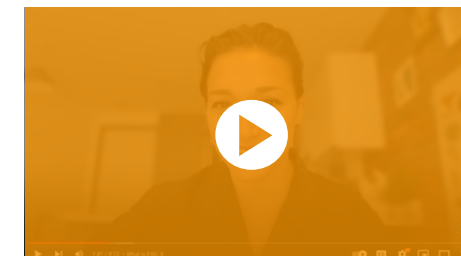
Replay the conversations on apprenticeships, moving from engineering to careers in sustainability and digital and the power of reverse mentoring.



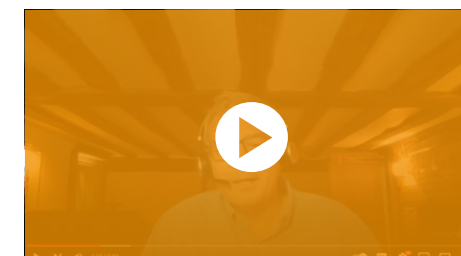
**Taking a Longer Path: Apprenticeships**  
Focusing on apprenticeships with former Apprentice of the Year, **Charlotte Jones** (AECOM) who is joined by **Wojciech Szwczak** (Ramboll & ACE Emerging Professionals chair) to discuss her inspirational career path.



**Failure won't make the bridge fall down!**  
Discussing changing career paths with **Tom Channell** (Ramboll) who is joined by **Wojciech Szwczak** (Ramboll & ACE Emerging Professionals chair) to explore the move from engineering to digital.



**Your degree does not define your career**  
Exploring changing career paths with **Kat Brown** (Bruntwood) who is joined by **Thomas Worthington** (Atkins & ACE Emerging Professionals vice chair) to discuss her professional shift from engineering to sustainability.



**The Power of reverse mentoring**  
**Marc Barone** (formerly AECOM) and **Kat Brown** (Bruntwood) are two former participants in a reverse mentoring scheme. Together they explore how it can be transformative for everyone involved.



New date for Consultancy & Engineering Awards - Thursday 19 January 2023  
London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square - [Find out more on page 7](#)





# Autumn Statement confirms our sector's strategic importance



## Stephen Marcos Jones on the outcomes of the chancellor's statement.

The Autumn Statement was the third major fiscal event for the UK in two months. Is it any wonder that uncertainty is at the very top of business leaders' concerns?

We are living through challenging times, but the recent levels of political instability have made it difficult and sometimes nigh on impossible – for all businesses in all sectors – to enact sustainable plans to deal with a frankly difficult situation.

In any normal circumstances, working in a world emerging from a global pandemic, facing an inflationary crisis, and a conflict on the edges of Europe would be challenging, but for businesses in the UK, the situation has been further compounded by recent domestic political events.

For our members, who need to plan long-term to ensure they have the skills, resource and capacity to deliver the projects and programmes expected of them, certainty is of the utmost importance. For the multi-nationals in our sector, certainty will mean greater confidence in investing in UK operations.

This message of stability was one I shared with the chancellor in a letter ahead of his Statement. I outlined the importance of our sector in delivering jobs, growth and opportunity while boosting productivity through maintaining investment in the infrastructure and construction pipeline – delivering our members the clarity they need to plan ahead.

Bearing this in mind, I was encouraged to see the government maintain the capital programme, which means that the **Northern Powerhouse Rail** core, **HS2**, and **new hospitals programme** can continue, by and large, as previously announced. It was also positive to see progress on a new energy infrastructure, **Sizewell C**. While some in

our sector have pointed out that the capital programme being maintained effectively means a cut owing to rising inflation, the fact remains in a fiscal event where around £35bn of savings were made, our pipeline has emerged relatively unscathed, for now.

This should be viewed as an endorsement of our industry's role in not only delivering the projects which will unlock opportunity across the UK, but in supporting government ambitions around innovation and increasing productivity.

In response, our industry will need to deliver its "side of the bargain" by investing in resource to meet this demand, but we should view the Autumn Statement as vindication for our sector which is seen as an important driver for economic growth and of huge strategic importance to the UK.



**Stephen Marcos Jones** is CEO of the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE).

# A mixed report card for COP27



## Guto Davies explores the key takeaways from the global climate conference.

In the words of the COP27 president, the conference "[was] an opportunity to showcase unity against an existential threat that we can only overcome through concerted action and effective implementation."

But how much progress was really made in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt? What does the conference and its announcements mean in the short, medium, and long term? A mixed report card is probably the most accurate assessment – with some progress – but a huge gap between the action now required and the reality in 2022.

Only a few days after COP27, the link between net zero and a growing economy was worryingly missing from the prime minister's speech to delegates at the CBI conference in Birmingham – a missed opportunity to reaffirm the government's commitment to the transition, and most importantly, highlight that the transition to

net zero can be an economic driver rather than a drain on resource.

Returning to COP27, two areas stood out in particular.

Firstly, the UK Transition Plan Taskforce Framework which sets out the process which companies must follow to submit net zero plans by the end of 2023. It provides the opportunity for companies based in the UK, including EIC members, to show real leadership in this area.

Conversations in our Climate Change advocacy group have rightly focused on the role of members in the transition and there is an acknowledgement that implementation of the TPT Framework could be challenging, particularly as we consider the ongoing macro-economic challenges. The clients our members work with often have high ambitions when it comes to climate change and the transition, but in reality few will be able to meet the criteria in full. We will also need to ensure that resource earmarked to develop and deliver these plans.

Secondly, we saw the release of ISO Net Zero Guidelines, which will underpin

subsequent net zero standards. This is a significant step which provides a foundation for what good net zero process and governance looks like. The Guidelines, "provide a common reference for collective efforts, offering a global basis for harmonising, understanding, and planning for net zero for actors at the state, regional, city and organisational level."

The global political process continues to play a huge role in net zero, however the short-comings in previous post-COP agreements show that far more needs to be done with those working on the ground. Our sector has long led by example and worked to achieve meaningful progress – our expertise will be needed over the coming months as we move from political ambition to tangible and practical reality.



**Guto Davies** is head of policy at the Environmental Industries Commission (EIC).





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