

MODUS

by RICS

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THE PUB SURVEYOR 14

Meet Stephen Radford MRICS, who manages an estate of 1,400 pubs

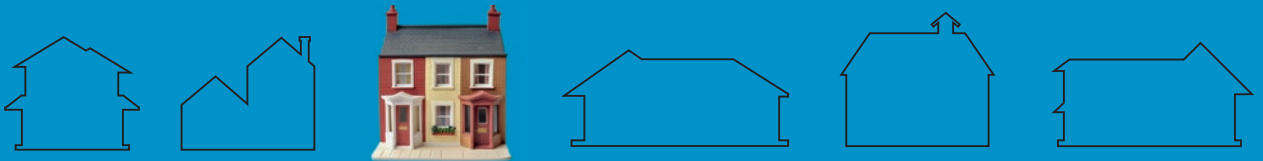
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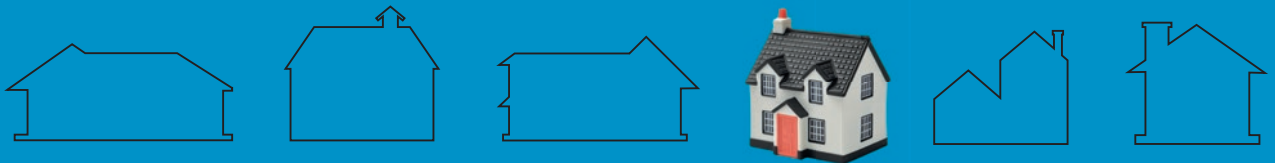
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1,200,000



EMPTY



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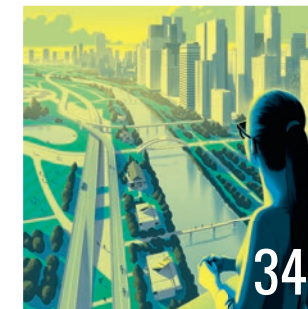
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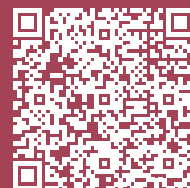
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Justin Sullivan FRICS – the RICS President looks to the year ahead



It is an absolute honour to take the position of President of RICS. Having spent many years as an active member on various boards and Governing Council, to reach the presidency is a pinnacle that makes me very proud and grateful to all those who have supported me - you know who you are!

I have been working with the new RICS leadership team since 2023. Governing Council has watched it grow under the strong leadership of Justin Young into what we have now, which is so good to see.

Taking over from the previous President, Tina Paillet FRICS, has given me big shoes to fill. When you become RICS President you are asked for three areas of focus for Governing Council over your term as President (we have been doing that for 156 years). However, given the huge amount of change RICS has gone through, it did not seem right to me that I personally choose what Governing Council is focusing on.

I said this in the interview to Governing Council before they elected me.

So, I have met with members of Governing Council, RICS Board, the Executive team and have attended many RICS events over the past two years and have chosen the following two priorities: **1. Next generation and education** – from the member events that RICS ran this year, what came through consistently was the skills shortage, and the need for us to do more to attract a diverse next generation. I want to engage more with

“RICS continues to be a global leader and standard setter”

our accredited universities, but I also think we should be looking at much earlier in education and alternative means of becoming a member, both inside and outside the UK.

2. Recognition of the profession’s impact – as a profession we’re incredibly passionate about the impact of our work, and therefore it is my goal as President to ensure that our members can continue to have their desired impact and feel recognised for their contribution to the industry.

I am personally very excited by the return of a printed edition of Modus in the UK, but this is just the start of what we are looking to do as we build our programme of thought leadership. As a result of member feedback from the Shaping the Future tour, we will continue to work with our local boards to create events that are relevant, future-looking and engaging.

As well as this new publication you can keep up to date with the profession through our seminars and conferences, in-person and online around the world, and our professional group panels will be running events to update members in their areas of specialism. Meanwhile, I’ll be travelling around to meet as many of you as I can and hear what makes you proud to be part of RICS, and what you’d like to improve.

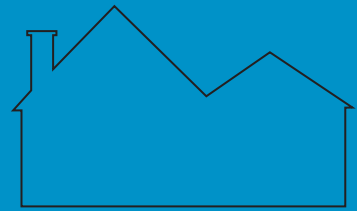
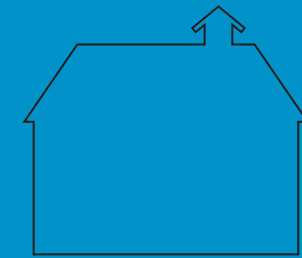
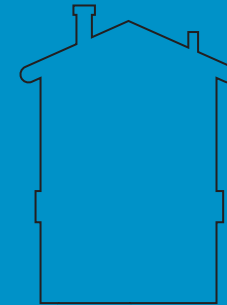
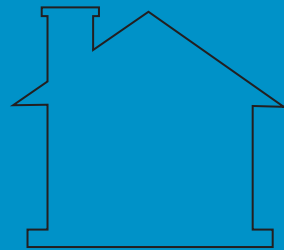
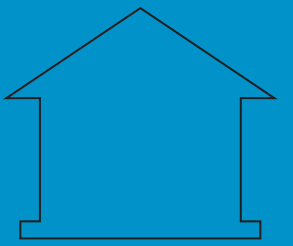
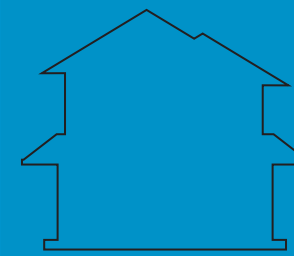
I’m proud that RICS continues to be a global leader and standard-setter. Through our relationships with surveying bodies in other nations – such as India, China and America – and with international organisations, we are committed to developing the profession and ensuring that a charter from RICS remains a recognised and respected qualification on every continent. This is something else I’ll be supporting over the next 12 months.

You’ll get regular updates from me as part of Modus online, and in this publication, and I look forward to hearing what you need from your President.

Have a great 2025!

Read more expert insight and opinion from the RICS President in his monthly column online at ww3.rics.org/modus

1,200,000



EMPTY

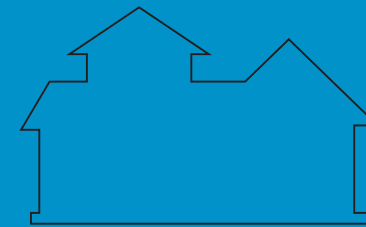
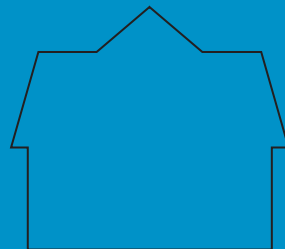
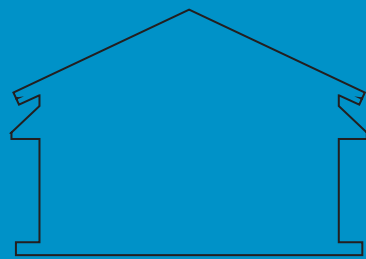


Britain has up to 1.2m unoccupied homes that could be brought back into circulation, but housing organisations believe stronger state intervention is needed to solve the problem...

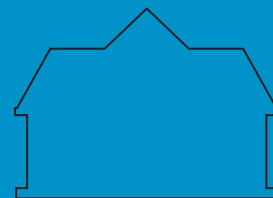


Could filling empty homes solve the housing crisis?

WORDS BY GELA PERTUSINI



HOMES



SHUTTERSTOCK, GETTY



It is a sunny September morning in Strood, a town in Medway, Kent, about 30 miles south-east of central London.

Outside a handsome, four-storey Victorian house a man called Chris is waiting while a locksmith fiddles with its door. The front garden is so badly overgrown with brambles and buddleia that the basement and ground floor windows are largely hidden. A neighbour comes out to complain that he has had to cut the vegetation back when it has grown across his own path.

The locksmith opens the door and Chris enters with some apprehension. There is a faint smell of mildew and every room, he discovers, is stuffed with piles of furniture, cardboard boxes, linens, old toys and papers. But – apart from a dead rat near the back door and a small area of damp in an attic room – there are few horrors. “What a relief,” he says. “I was expecting far, far worse.”

The house belonged to Chris’s late mother-in-law and, following a family dispute, has not been occupied for the three years since her death. It is hardly an aberration. A short stroll around any

neighbourhood will quickly reveal homes that are left empty and which could be used to relieve Britain’s housing crisis.

Based on council tax records, the charity Shelter puts the number at 261,000 in England and Wales. Other campaigning groups say that, once council tax-exempt properties (such as those that are empty because their owners are in care homes or the property is going through a drawn-out probate) and temporarily unoccupied or uninhabitable homes are included the figure rises to about 1.2m, and, according to one piece of government research, as many as 1.5m. However, this 2021 census data was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic when some people may have moved back in with family members, leaving more unoccupied dwellings. There are 47,000 and 21,000 empty homes in Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively.

“I would quite openly and honestly say that if there are 1.2m empty homes, then there are 1.2m reasons why,” says Adam Cliff of the Empty Homes Network. “Every property, owner and circumstance is unique.”

However, he feels there are seven broad reasons why properties fall out of occupation: the owner doesn’t have enough money to refurbish or upgrade a property; the owner has too much money and is happy to leave their property empty as house prices rise; the owner has too little time to manage any works; the owner has too much time and potters with no sense of urgency; the owner has too little knowledge about how to manage a property and feels overwhelmed; the owner has too much knowledge and is intimidated by the various rules and regulations.

The seventh “key factor” that covers all owners, Cliff believes, is a lack of vision. “If they have a property that could be housing someone or enriching them and they’re not doing that,” he says, “then it’s hard to justify.”

Property as an investment

So how did the UK end up in this position and can these empty properties help ease its housing crisis? The blame lies partly with the British relationship to home-owning – every Englishman’s home is famously his castle, meaning that there is a squeamishness about telling people what they should do with their properties. But property in the UK has also become a sought-after investment which, according to Chris Bailey of Action on Empty Homes, has skewed our relationship with it.

“We have a problem with seeing property as an asset class,” he says of the temptation to hoard properties even if this ends up with their owners having to pay council tax, utilities bills and insurance. “A lot of people see a property as a pension. It’s definitely become a factor.”

Although the popular image of an empty home is a derelict shell, according to Cliff the vast majority require fairly minimal



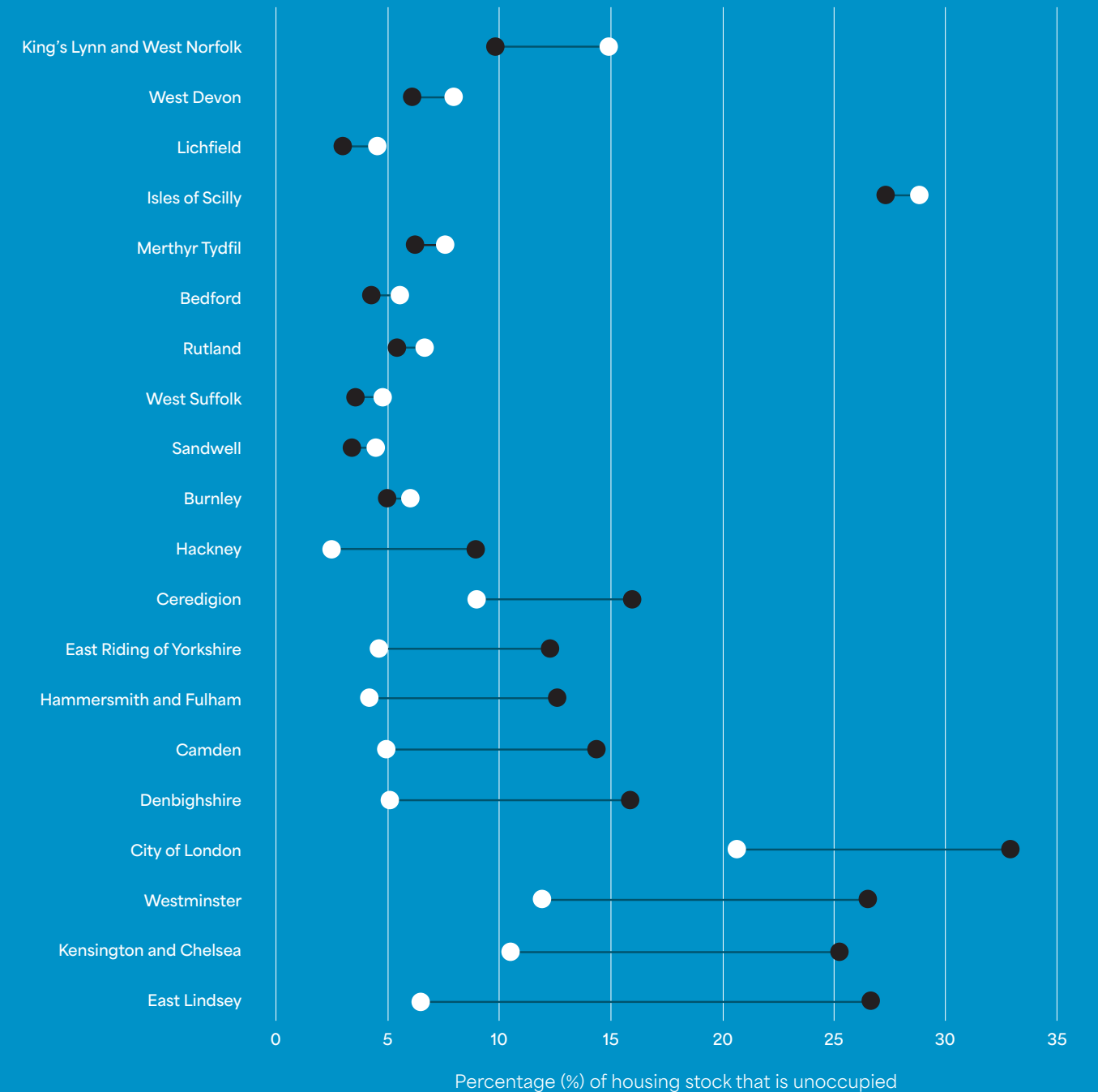
“I would quite openly and honestly say that if there are 1.2m empty homes, then there are 1.2m reasons why”

ADAM CLIFF
EMPTY HOMES NETWORK

THE EMPTY HOUSING PICTURE ACROSS ENGLAND AND WALES

The chart below shows the regions with the highest and lowest proportion of unoccupied dwellings in England and Wales, and how things have changed in just a decade

● 2011 ● 2021



SOURCE: CENSUS 2011 AND 2021 FROM THE OFFICE OF NATIONAL STATISTICS



A neglected house in Hornsey, London. The average house price in the area is £785,400 (Zoopla, 2024).

work to bring them back into occupation if rescued early enough: redecoration, new flooring, possibly a new bathroom or kitchen. The longer they remain empty, however, the more likely they are to fall into disrepair and to draw negative attention, potentially attracting vandals, squatters or vermin and casting a blight on neighbouring properties.

There are attempts to encourage owners either to sell or rent their empty homes but most of these depend on local authorities identifying the properties and, crucially, the owners themselves. The funding has been haphazard since 2015 when the Empty Homes Programme, a 2012 initiative started by the UK's coalition government, was abandoned.

The programme allowed local authorities and housing associations to work with owners of empty properties, offering grants towards refurbishment in return for the right to rent them to social tenants. Although the programme only delivered about 10,000 properties – amid accusations that it was too bureaucratic – the cost of reoccupying these homes averaged about £20,000 per property, which is far, far cheaper than building new.

“It's frustrating that we had a programme that was successful, which stopped, making the problem worse,” says Bailey. “If you look at the figures since 2015, empty homes have grown at an average rate of about 5% every year since then. It is illogical that we have growing numbers of empty properties when we have more and more people needing homes.”

Action on Empty Homes advocates for the Empty Homes Programme – or a similar scheme – to be reinstated. But is there an alternative way of persuading property owners to repopulate them? A council tax surcharge of 100% was introduced in 2013

for properties that have been empty for two years and, from next year, the vacancy period will reduce to one year. It is largely seen as ineffective as the number of empty properties has grown steadily. For wealthy speculators interested in capital growth – particularly overseas buyers looking for a safe haven for their capital – it is unlikely to be a concern.

In Wales, from April 2023, the maximum level at which local authorities could set council tax premiums on second homes was increased to 300%.

Bailey also points out that a house which falls into serious disrepair while empty could end up being declared uninhabitable and avoid the charge altogether, thus creating an incentive for other owners to do nothing. Sadly, there seems little urgency in tackling empty properties.

Make an empty house a home

While not every empty house will be salvageable – or even suitable – for reoccupation, there are many hundreds of thousands that could be repurposed. The charity Crisis suggests that 40,000 properties could be brought back into use in three years; Shelter has published a report outlining the benefits of targeting funding for turning empty homes into social housing in 10 cities.

“There are important financial and social reasons to bring empty houses back into circulation,” says Bailey. “There are 117,000 families in often very low-quality temporary accommodation. We are currently spending £2.2bn a year on this and the health and educational outcomes are likely to be very poor. The government wants to decarbonise, and empty

homes are a fantastic place to start: people can be taught the skills [involved in making homes greener] and the properties will be more energy efficient and attractive as a result. Britain lags behind the rest of Europe in its housing, so many are cold and draughty.”

Both he and Cliff favour encouragement rather than enforcement approaches when it comes to bringing homes back into circulation. They suggest reduced capital gains tax for owners selling the properties to social landlords; reduced stamp duty for private buyers to make the properties more attractive; and matched funding or low-cost loans to help owners unable to afford refurbishment works.

But other countries have proven the need for enforcement as well. The Brussels regional government introduced an annual tax of €500 for every square metre of an unoccupied residential building's façade (a typical British semi-detached house frontage would measure about 30m²). In 2023 in Catalonia, the government passed legislation to force owners to sell their properties to local authorities if they were unable to “justify” keeping them unoccupied. Vancouver has perhaps the most notorious tax, charging owners of empty homes 3% annually of the property's value. Even a similar 1% levy in the UK (where, according to the Land Registry, the average house price is ▶



“If you look at the figures since 2015, empty homes have grown at an average rate of about 5% every year since then”

CHRIS BAILEY
ACTION ON EMPTY HOMES

SHUTTERSTOCK

↓ MORE VACANT HOMES IN SUNNY STATES

The number of vacant properties in the United States has been steadily declining since the subprime mortgage crisis

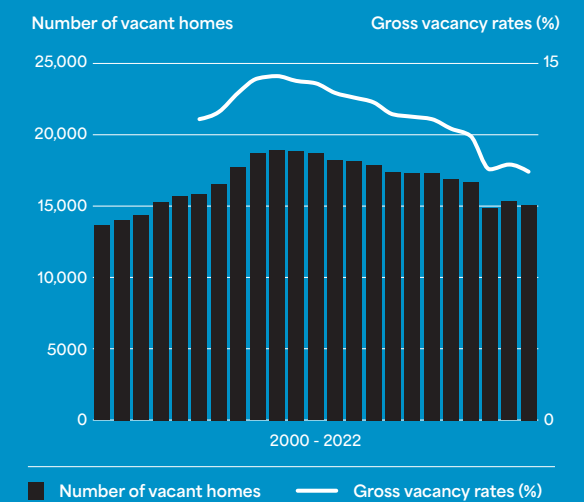
In the US, there were an estimated 15.1m vacant homes in 2022, but the vast majority of these are rental units and many of those are holiday homes. Still, it equates to 10.5% of the overall housing stock in a country where, in the state of California alone, approximately 180,000 people experienced homelessness in 2023.

“Of the nation's 75 largest metropolitan statistical areas, two in Florida – Cape Coral-Fort Myers and North Port-Bradenton-Sarasota – recorded gross vacancy rates that were four times and three times higher than the average rate, respectively,” says the US government information resource USAFacts. “The average rate for the country's largest metropolitan statistical areas was 9.1%.

“However, since gross vacancy rate is a measure of all vacant properties – including vacation properties – states with several popular tourist destinations, like Florida and Hawaii, will always register slightly higher rates.”

The chart shows that the number of vacant homes in the US has been steadily falling since a peak in 2008, when the American subprime mortgage crisis acted as a catalyst to a global financial crisis.

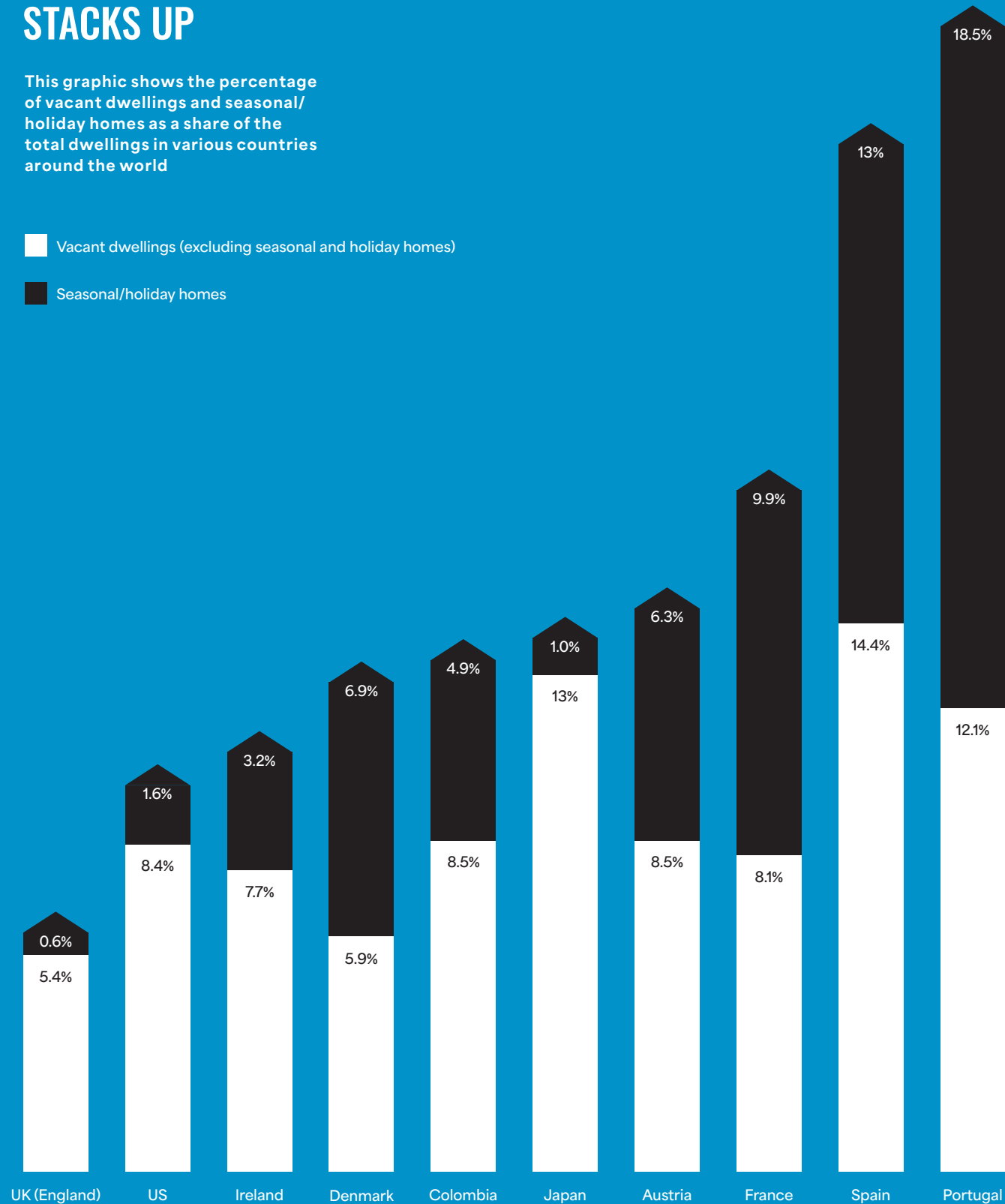
Number of vacant homes in the US



↓ HOW THE HOLIDAY HOMES PICTURE STACKS UP

This graphic shows the percentage of vacant dwellings and seasonal/holiday homes as a share of the total dwellings in various countries around the world

■ Vacant dwellings (excluding seasonal and holiday homes)
■ Seasonal/holiday homes



SOURCE: OECD.ORG/CONTENT/OECD/EN/DATA/DATASETS/OECD-AFFORDABLE-HOUSING-DATABASE.HTML, DATA FROM 2022 OR LATER

Japan has a big problem with abandoned houses (known as *akiya*), such as this one in Kanazawa. This is due to people moving to cities and a shrinking population. You can learn more about the scourge of empty homes in Japan in our feature on ww3.rics.org/modus.



“In countries that have much more transparency, it’s far easier to impose vacancy taxes”

GETTY
CHRIS BAILEY
ACTION ON EMPTY HOMES

£283,000, rising to just over £500,000 in London), could be significant enough to get all but the wealthiest to take action. Or so you would think. According to Chris Bailey, property ownership in the UK is often opaque – making it extremely difficult for officials to track down owners and use the very limited enforcement powers that they have. Properties that have not changed hands in many years might not be recorded at the Land Registry. Some buyers – especially those worried about their assets and their privacy – use complex offshore holding companies to buy properties. Other people may not know that they own a particular house if they are the distant relative, and eventual heir, of someone who has died without making a will. “In countries that have much more transparency, it’s far easier to impose vacancy taxes,” says Bailey. “To make any of these measures work, you need a register of ownership and usage. There are local authorities that have had to resort to using heir hunter companies to ascertain ownership.” Back in Strood, Chris is phoning around house clearance companies and tracking down someone to hack through the property’s garden. Once the house is cleared, he intends to put it on the market, priced to sell, in the hope that it might be occupied again within the next few months. “It’s a nice house, it could make someone a great home,” he says. “It’s a shame that it’s been left empty for so long.” ■

This feature contains quotes and material from two Modus features about the global empty homes crisis that can be found online at ww3.rics.org/modus

Stephen Radford MRICS

The *pub* surveyor

Buying, selling and valuing pub businesses sounds like a dream job, but it's a challenging sector that requires specialist knowledge of a much-loved asset class

WORDS BY KAREN DAY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HUGH FOX

“Pubs and leisure have always been a slightly neglected part of the surveying scene,” says Stephen Radford MRICS, head of estates at Punch Pubs & Co. “You find people either love the sector or hate it. Those who like it have been there for 20-plus years because it is quite addictive. You’ve got an asset class that we can all relate to. Everyone’s got a view about going to the pub.”

Radford has been a pub surveyor for 26 years, working for a range of UK and international pub retailers and brewers including Greene King and Heineken. He joined Punch Pubs in early 2019 and he now manages its 1,400-pub estate as well as its highly active acquisitions, disposals and development programmes.

Punch, along with the wider pub industry, sits at a crucial intersection in British cultural and economic life. Going to the pub is how many Brits meet, socialise and relax. In fact, according to market research firm Mintel, nine out of 10 adults in the UK visit pubs. They are stitched into UK heritage having sat at the centre of community life for hundreds of years, and they generate nearly a million jobs and £26bn in added value to the economy every year.

It’s an asset class that touches people, communities and business, says Radford, which means pub surveyors require a special skill set.

“We’re one of the few parts of the profession where valuation is based on the profits method,” he explains. “So we have to fully understand the business. That’s always been the interest for me. It does make you a boring date though. If I’m out with my friends and family, I start counting the number of customers and how long staff are taking to bring the bills.” ▶



“You need curiosity to understand how the publican makes money”

There's also an emotional dimension to his job. Publican employees live and work in pub company assets, while customers feel a deep sense of ownership over their local.

“You have to be good with people,” he says. “The real estate bit is easy to deal with. I feel sometimes its 60% psychology and 40% academic.”

Managing the estate

A typical day for Radford is “infrequent”, and his job is split into distinct areas. He manages a team of nine, including five chartered surveyors, who set the rents for a leased estate of around 900 pubs, generating millions of pounds annually. The rest of its estate is run through a managed franchise-style model. Radford manages the day-to-day needs of Punch's estate, from neighbour disputes down to party wall issues.

He also oversees the group's acquisition strategy, which has a target of buying 100 sites over the next four years. This is driven by its US-based private equity owner Fortress Investment Group, which acquired the business in 2021 for a reported £1bn. At the “bottom end of its estate” Radford is managing its disposals,

selling pubs he deems no longer viable in their operating model, generating between £15m and £25m a year.

But his eye is also on development, making optimum use of all of Punch's land. This ranges from building houses – he enjoys watching once derelict land being turned into homes – to creating retail units or renting out space to companies such as Amazon for lockers. This development activity has produced £45m in capital receipts since 2017.

“The pub estate is varied and then, in between times, we manage things like phone boxes and parcel lockers. We've got just about every asset that you can imagine that we deal with.”

Radford says he speaks to Punch's owners on investment and disposals decisions on a “near daily basis”, and he tries to visit one of the company's pubs at least once a week.

He concedes that at times the job can be stressful, and if he's been out in pubs all day, they aren't always a source of relaxation for him. He's been restoring a motorbike in his spare time and says concentrating on riding allows him to “shut down everything else... It's probably a bit odd, throwing yourself down the road on two wheels, but it is strangely calming.”

Changing habits

In an industry highly exposed to social, economic and legislative changes, future-proofing the estate is crucial to the pub business.

“COVID-19 was a terrible tragedy, but it did teach us some lessons,” he says. “People have changed their habits, working from home is firmly fixed into our psyche, so we like to be where people live because that's where they are going to socialise now.”

He says the acquisition strategy focuses on suburban pubs that need investment or improved management. “We like to spot those because sometimes you can get them for better value.”

Future-proofing also means letting go of the pubs that no longer fit into the group's model. Radford concedes that while there are probably too many pubs in the UK now (more than 45,000 according to the British Beer and Pub Association), disposing of them is a difficult part of his job.

“It's hard to see a pub closed. It can be quite emotional because it feels like you're changing the world in that environment forever, potentially,” he says. “But what we'd like to do is make the ones that are viable better and stronger.”

And he says that despite changing social habits, particularly among younger people, the pub industry will continue to progress. “I think we proved during the pandemic that the thing people really missed was being with each other.”

Becoming a surveyor

Radford says he learned the people skills that are crucial to his work from his first job working on the front tills of Halifax building society as a teenager. “You'd see hundreds of people, sometimes the same people every week,” he



says. “I was dealing with large amounts of cash but also talking to people all the time. It was educational.”

An interest in property and surveying was piqued when he became a mortgage advisor. “I read the [surveyor] reports, and it was almost like a book to read, the story of this house,” he recalls.

He then discovered commercial property, which he found much more challenging, and spent four years studying part-time while working to get his degree from the University College of Estate Management (UCEM). “It was a long way round, but I'm pleased, because what I gained along the way has helped me in what I'm doing now.”

In 1998 Radford started his career as a pub surveyor with Avebury Taverns. Two years later he moved to Greene King, which ended up as a 16-year stint with the company. “It was a long stretch, but the business changed massively in that time. It was a sleepy kind of East Anglian brewer but it became the biggest village pub operator in the UK in that period,” he says.

Two years at Heineken followed. Working for an international company with global reach gave him a completely different perspective. He joined Burton-based Punch five years ago.



PROFESSIONAL STANDARD FOR LICENSED LEISURE PROPERTIES

RICS members and regulated firms provide professional advice and representation for tenants, owners and other stakeholders, such as lenders, across the licensed leisure industry. The Institution is developing a new professional standard: *Valuation of licensed leisure property 2nd edition* (rics.org), to be published later this year.

This will replace the *Capital and Rental Valuation of Public Houses, Bars, Restaurants and Nightclubs in England and Wales*.

Tenants, individual owners, pub companies, industry bodies and valuers contributed to the recent public consultation.

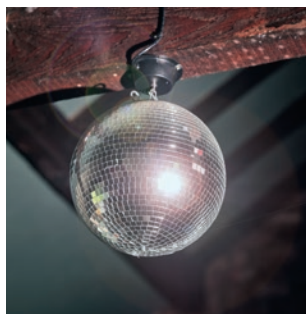
RICS has been careful to undertake development of the new standard in a balanced and inclusive way. The initial development process was undertaken through a series of forums involving tenants, operators, valuers, trade bodies and other stakeholders. Following this, a group of expert valuers developed the consultation draft.

The expert group does not include employees of pub companies or people operating licensed leisure businesses. Expert group members act for landlords and tenants from a range of valuation firm sizes. Recognising that non-valuers are also interested in this area, we've included specific additional guidance for them in the updated standard.

What keeps Radford in the pub industry is his curiosity, the variety and the specialist knowledge he's accrued. “I enjoy the fact that you need to have that curiosity to understand how the publican makes money. You don't need that in valuing an office or an industrial unit. It's a specialist kind of knowledge and it's a specialism that I enjoy, and I don't want to let that go and lose it.”

He also has tremendous faith in the resilience of the pub industry. “There's some very interesting things coming down the line with augmented reality, where you could receive information through smart beer glasses [such as promotions delivered to your phone],” he says.

“I think the pub will evolve. It's evolved through the past 500 years and it will continue to do so.” ■



Financing

net zero

neighbourhoods

How can we finance the retrofit of 29m homes in the UK? A panel of experts discussed this topic in a recent webinar

WORDS BY KAY PITMAN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MIKE LEMANSKI

According to the UK Green Building Council, as many as 29m homes will need retrofitting before 2050 to meet the UK targets set under the Climate Change Act 2008. Yet amid a cost-of-living crisis, the financial capability and willingness of households to pay for this retrofit is limited and there are insufficient public funds to cover the entire costs.

Cities Commission for Climate Investment (3Ci) is a partnership between Connected Places Catapult, Core Cities UK, London Councils, Key Cities, Scottish Cities Alliance, and other local authorities across the UK, aimed at supporting local authorities to secure the necessary long-term finance for achieving net zero. Their Net Zero Neighbourhoods initiative aims to integrate a variety of projects – including retrofit of different housing types and tenures – into a combined attractive investment proposition.

RICS brought together a panel of property and investment experts to discuss the Net Zero Neighbourhoods initiative and evaluate its aims, which include to substantially reduce the need for public subsidy while allowing savings from the cost of the schemes to be passed to householders.

Cross financing underpins 3Ci's net zero neighbourhoods model

Steve Turner is director of 3Ci. He says: "One of the first pieces of work we did was to identify the cost for decarbonising the UK's 12 largest cities, including London. We identified a figure of £208bn. That figure is way beyond the public purse to fund. [To realise] the net zero transition, we will have to develop models that allow private investment to sit alongside public grants."

There are several asset types in a neighbourhood including housing, commercial, green and blue infrastructure and transport infrastructure. Adopting

"We will have to develop models that allow private investment to sit alongside public grants"

STEVE TURNER
3Ci

a place-based approach is vital to overcoming the barriers to investment in assets, such as residential, that typically lack scale and a stable, low-risk source of returns. Turner explains the role that cross-financing can play in a neighbourhood approach to decarbonisation: "By that I mean taking the revenues generated from renewables and using it to fund the retrofit of more challenging assets like residential."

When it comes to financing decarbonisation and retrofit, access to capital is not the problem, says Melanie Leech, chief executive of the British Property Federation. "The problem is harnessing that capital in ways that allow investors to meet their fiduciary duties and manage risk."

Charlotte Clark is director of regulation for the Association of British Insurers. "There are trillions of pounds in the UK's pension system," she says. "What we look for in investments are very long-term; over 30, 40 or 50 years... We look for steady returns. We like stability and certainty [because] we pay our pensions in a stable, secure kind of way. We're trying to match our investments to those sorts of liabilities."

The challenge with retrofitting involves how to generate a stable income stream to pay back the investment. Clark says: "Do you try to put a charge on the neighbourhood? Do you put a charge on people's energy bills because you know they will be lower?"

By making the payback mechanism as certain as possible, you can make the capital as cheap as possible, Clark says. "That's why it is so important to work in partnership. Government can take certain risks on its balance sheet that the private sector pension firms would find very difficult because [either] the regulations won't allow them to, or because the return they would need on their investment would make the project less economical."

Following the development of a detailed business case with HM Treasury, 3Ci has been working closely with a range of major financial institutions, organisations and local authorities to develop a financial model that generates low risk, stable returns on investments in net zero neighbourhoods. There are 40 neighbourhood schemes in the project's pipeline.

A place-based approach provides scale for investors

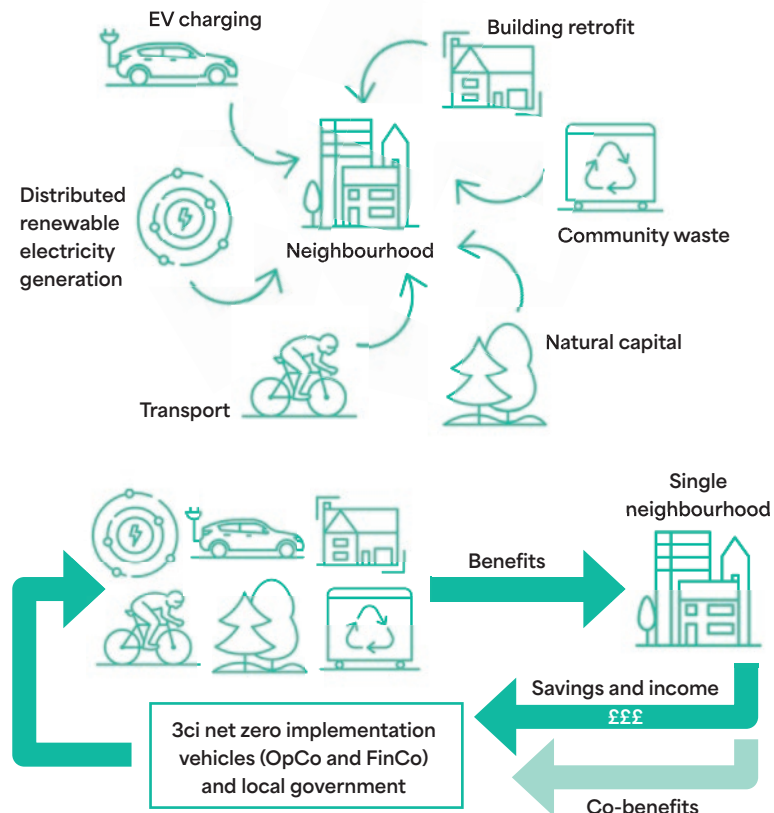
While dealing with individual properties is a huge risk for an investor, the net zero neighbourhoods model is based on a proxy area of around 1,000 homes, says Turner. Leech agrees, saying it is the scale proposition that will allow place-based investment models to harness private capital.

Leech explains why successful approaches must also be tailored to local circumstances. While the end ▶



A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Investing in eco-friendly elements is not only good for the environment, it could bring income back into the neighbourhood



a partner with a clear vision and leadership. The private sector provides the investment and the local authority delivers the services.”

Public and private sector collaboration underpins success

Turner explains that one challenge to making net zero neighbourhoods successful is the availability of the skills and capacity to develop place-based investment models. Some parts of the UK, such as Greater Manchester and the West Midlands, have fantastic capabilities to bring together public and private sector partnerships, whereas others don't.

“In the present day, these skills tend to reside in private sector rather than local government, and accessing those skills is not cheap,” says Turner. Clark agrees: “If the UK plan is for [local authorities] to work with private sector investors, there has to be funding that allows them to build up that resource and those capabilities.” ■

Kay Pitman is World Built Environment Forum Manager, RICS

result is the same – getting to net zero – the starting point will be completely different. A neighbourhood in the north-east of England may have access to wind power from the coast, whereas the solutions for city-centre neighbourhoods will be different. The profile of home ownership, industry and demographic profile of the population will all be different.

A net zero neighbourhood model that uses blended finance must align public and private investment in such a way as to produce returns on investment, but also generate outcomes that are important to local people. Some properties that are being lived in are not fit for purpose, says Turner. Retrofitting those homes to be more energy efficient can improve the health and economic situation of residents, releasing pressure on local health and social care as well.

“One of the things that I think 3Ci has done really well is getting together a lot of different actors,” says Clark. She explains that sitting in meetings with local government, people with technology expertise, property professionals or investment experts reveals that when there is something you think is hard, someone else thinks it is easy.

Local governments must lead net zero initiatives

“We all live in neighbourhoods... and we recognise what makes them more attractive for people to want to live there and for businesses to locate there,” says Turner. The challenge lies in the fragmented operation and management of local assets, some of which is in private ownership and some in public.

“It is a governance challenge; making partnerships work so that everyone is working towards the same objective. Local government is best placed to curate the programme of work to create net zero neighbourhoods because they are democratically accountable bodies answerable to the communities that live in those neighbourhoods,” Turner says.

Leech agrees. “What local authorities can bring to these models is the security for investors in having

“What local authorities can bring to these models is the security for investors in having a partner with a clear vision”

MELANIE LEECH
BRITISH PROPERTY FEDERATION

MEMBER VOICE

The way we use the office has changed



“We need to collaborate across the industry to attract talent”

LAURA COLLINS MRICS
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR,
STANHOPE PLC

In 2022, I was interviewed for *Modus* about how we can employ more women in the industry. We were just out of the COVID-19 pandemic and lots of questions were being asked. Was the office surplus to demand? Was home working here to stay?

Opinion seems to have changed quite significantly since then, and we see increasing numbers of firms mandating more days in the office than at home. As developers, we are seeing high demand for Grade A office space in London.

What is interesting is how the office is now being used more and more as a communications hub, a project space, a chance to catch up with colleagues and collaborate – even more so than before the pandemic. At Stanhope, for example, we have a flexible policy but we are asked to try and accommodate face-time in the office four times a week.

Working from home has allowed me to continue to be flexible, but being present in the office reduces my stress levels significantly. I found that meetings were being put into the diary back-to-back from Tuesday to Thursday and I'd go home with a headache each day, worrying about the volume of desk work I needed to catch up on before the next Tuesday struck.

There have been real positives, as I do seem to have become more efficient by having those water-cooler moments instead of playing telephone tennis for days on end trying to get through to people stuck in endless Teams calls. And dare I say it, the email traffic has calmed down from these resulting conversations.

As employers and employees continue to wrangle about the sweet spot of flexible working, I stand by what I said in 2017 when I returned to work following my

maternity leave after having my daughter – it's never going to be a one-size-fits-all situation. My circumstances will be completely different to my colleagues', what works for me won't work for others, whether male or female, and there must be give and take on both sides.

While I am now in the office much more than I was in 2022, I still feel like I achieve a good work-home balance. My employer and my clients get the best out of me because of that.

Everyone understands that we have lives away from our day jobs. There are no longer raised eyebrows if one of us leaves early or starts a bit later to accommodate our personal lives. This is down to fostering a culture of trust and accountability, no matter where we are working. We are part of a construction family and we all want success for each other.

Outside of work, I now run two Girlguiding groups. Each Monday evening, 46 young girls enter the doors and are returned home to their parents inspired and empowered that they can be whoever they want to be when they grow up.

We will still face some difficult days ahead, with a shrinking supply chain and a record number of vacancies in the construction industry. We need to collaborate across the industry to attract talent and show off the brilliant careers that can be enjoyed within our sector. If we work together we can reach more people and welcome them into this unique industry.

For more inspiring stories and insight from the brightest talents in chartered surveying, head to our website: ww3.rics.org/modus

The people's project



WORDS BY GELA PERTUSINI

Everton's new stadium: A 53,000-capacity venue could trigger regeneration in an underdeveloped area of Liverpool, but it must strike a delicate balance →

O

n a damp autumn day, the streets at the southern end of Liverpool's Walton neighbourhood are quiet and mostly empty. Its rows of Victorian terraces are typical of many British cities: modest, tightly packed housing built to accommodate the workers that served local industry.

Except, at the end of Oxtan Street, Winslow Street and half a dozen other small side roads, instead of a long-abandoned factory chimney, what dominates the area is the looming presence of Everton FC's stadium, Goodison Park.

Among the oldest football stadiums in England, Goodison Park first hosted Everton in 1892. Over the subsequent decades, it has been redeveloped and remodelled as Everton's popularity has grown, and now we have the site's present incarnation: a stadium with capacity for about 40,000 spectators.

It's a 100m by 68m royal blue Goliath that looks as if it has held its breath to squeeze itself into its plot and could swamp its tiny neighbours at any moment. On match days, it is not hard to imagine the disturbance created by the arrival of tens of thousands of fans as well as police officers, security staff, caterers, merchandise sellers, and the hundreds of other people who keep Goodison Park safe and solid.

But soon all that will change. Everton is in the middle of building a brand-new stadium about a mile and a half south-west of Goodison Park at Bramley-Moore Dock on the banks of the Mersey. The new stadium will be able to accommodate almost 13,000 more spectators than Goodison, and hopefully give fans something to cheer. More significantly for the city of Liverpool, Bramley-Moore will, it is hoped, help to regenerate this corner of Merseyside.

Bringing football to Bramley-Moore

The quest for a bigger stadium has been a long one. "We've a history of more than 30 years trying to build a stadium," says ▶

"We've a history of more than 30 years trying to build a stadium"

ALIX WALDRON
DIRECTOR OF NEW STADIUM DEVELOPMENT, EVERTON



Flowing football: the new stadium sits on the banks of the Mersey



The regeneration game: there are big plans for the area

Alix Waldron, director of new stadium development at Everton. “We looked at 52 different sites overall, but none of them came off in terms of ownership or planning. We needed somewhere that was big enough for the capacity we wanted, plus the fans wanted us to stay in the north of Liverpool. Seven years ago we signed the deal for Bramley-Moore.”

The neighbourhood could not be more different from Everton's current home. Brave pioneers have converted one single old warehouse into loft apartments but, except for that, the area seems mostly devoid of residents. It is an undeniably bleak, post-industrial sweep of land, empty but for a few run-down pubs and the occasional depot or builders' merchants.

While the city centre – visible from the new stadium's colossal southern stand – is a hive buzzing with high-end shopping, hundreds of restaurants and bars, museums, clubs and boutique hotels, the impression of prosperity vanishes abruptly here, just a few hundred metres away. Were it not for the glitzy stadium that has risen from the abandoned dock, few people would give it a second glance.

The stadium will be a cornerstone of Liverpool Waters, the masterplan to transform some 60ha of land along the waterfront. The Peel Group, which owns the land and has leased the site to

“About 70% of the stadium has been built off-site”

RUSSELL LLOYD MRICS
RLB

Everton FC, hopes that Bramley-Moore will bring all kinds of visitors to this once neglected area. Everton also wants to attract a whole new clientele.

“We want to host concerts, rugby, boxing, and smaller events, too,” says Waldron. “It will be in use all year round.”

The idea is that once these visitors become familiar with the stadium, they will feel friendlier towards its surroundings, maybe taking office space or buying one of the new apartments that are planned. This project, however, is not without controversy: the Peel Group's plans, in part, led to Liverpool's waterfront losing its UNESCO world heritage status in 2021.

Regeneration not guaranteed

The value of using sports facilities to regenerate an area is disputed. The club claimed early on that Bramley-Moore would offer a £1bn lift to the local economy but research by Stanford's Roger Noll and Andrew Zimbalist contests the benefits of stadium builds. A more recent study from New Zealand's Massey University was also dubious of their positive economic impact.

There is no doubt, however, that any intervention in this area will give it a lift. But it does come at a cost. The original price put forward by the club for the new stadium was £300m – which seemed optimistic. That figure swiftly pushed north of £500m. Then, in early 2024, the club disclosed that costs for the project had risen to more than £800m, as part of an appeal against a 10-point deduction for breaching the Premier League's financial rules.

The price also includes unusual attention to sustainability and heritage aspects of the build. “About 70% of the stadium has been built off-site,” says Russell Lloyd MRICS of RLB, who has worked on the project since its inception. “It's very green because it cuts down on waste, transport and the site workforce.”

However, construction of the new stadium has not been without incident. Work was temporarily suspended in August 2023, after the death of engineer and lifelong Everton fan Michael Jones. He died after being injured on the site and his ▶

↓ CAN EVERTON MOVE UP THE GREEN ENERGY TABLE WITH THE NEW STADIUM?

If a football club can't top the Premier League with its actions on the pitch, it can certainly set a good example off it.

1. Emirates Stadium, Arsenal

The Emirates is ranked as the Premier League's greenest stadium. Arsenal moved into its new home in 2006 and in 2018 became the first football club to install large-scale battery energy storage. The club also recycles 90% of its matchday waste.

2. Amex Stadium, Brighton & Hove Albion

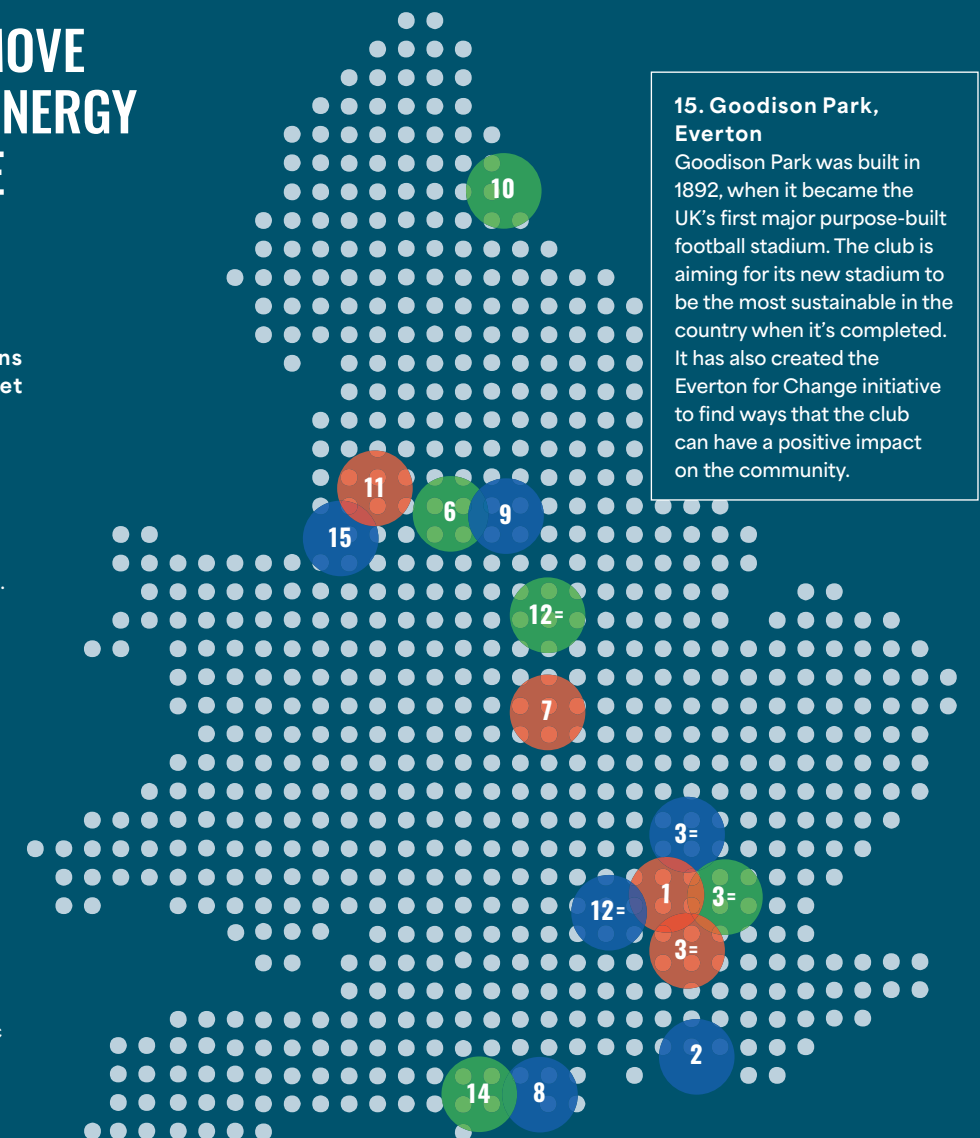
Brighton stadium is powered by 100% renewable energy and there are solar panels on the roof of the club's training ground. The stadium and training ground are BREEAM certified, and matchday tickets allow fans to travel on public transport for free within Brighton's travel zone.

3=. London Stadium, West Ham United

After the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympic Games had ended, work began on converting the stadium to become West Ham United's home ground. It has a capacity of 60,000 and makes use of much of the infrastructure put in place for the Olympics.

3=. Selhurst Park, Crystal Palace

Fans are strongly encouraged to take public transport to Crystal Palace games and the club is replacing all lights with LEDs. Selhurst Park was built 100 years ago in 1924, so it's not as energy efficient as some newer grounds.



15. Goodison Park, Everton

Goodison Park was built in 1892, when it became the UK's first major purpose-built football stadium. The club is aiming for its new stadium to be the most sustainable in the country when it's completed. It has also created the Everton for Change initiative to find ways that the club can have a positive impact on the community.

The rest of the table...

- 7. King Power Stadium, Leicester City
- 8. Vitality Stadium, Bournemouth
- 9. Etihad Stadium, Manchester City
- 10. St. James' Park, Newcastle United
- 11. Anfield, Liverpool
- 12=. The City Ground, Nottingham Forest
- 12=. Stamford Bridge, Chelsea
- 14. St. Mary's Stadium, Southampton



Everton's new ends:
how the complex will
look on completion

fellow workers were offered trauma counselling, while a health and safety review was carried out. The club has also promised to create a lasting tribute to Jones, working with his family on an appropriate memorial.

Involving the fans

“Stadiums are difficult projects,” says Lloyd. “They’re very complex. They need to provide retail, hospitality, sports facilities and office spaces, and there are lots of operational issues. We had two years of pre-contract planning and that has been an immense benefit because we really got to tackle the details with Laing O’Rourke, the contractor.”

As soon as Bramley-Moore is operational, work will start on demolishing Goodison Park. Everton prides itself on engagement with its fans, most of whom are local to Liverpool, unlike fans of bigger, more world-renowned clubs in the north-west such as Liverpool, Manchester City and Manchester Utd. Through its charity, Everton in the Community, which offers everything from housing support to suicide prevention initiatives and work experience, some of the Goodison site will be given over to benefit locals, although housing is likely to cover most of it.

It’s going to take fans some time to adjust from the familiarity of Everton’s current home to its new one. The club is hoping to woo fans by involving them in a soft opening of the stadium as they test it for crowd-safety measures. Whether it can attract others too, and give the surroundings a much-needed leg up, we will have to wait and see.

“It was the worst site to build on,” says Waldron, “but it will be the best site in the end.” ■



SUSTAINABLE SOCCER

Between 95% and 99% of the site’s demolition materials have been recycled

The site will have a large array of solar panels and rainwater will be harvested to be used in the facility’s toilets. Developers have kept parking spaces to a minimum and visitors are encouraged to use public transport (Everton is contributing to improvements at the local Sandhills railway station), cycle, or take a shuttle bus.

Between 95% and 99% of the site’s demolition materials have been recycled and great care has been taken with the site’s 400 industrial heritage assets (the site is partially listed and part of a conservation area). The stadium sits directly on the water’s edge and its piling straddles the old dock’s listed walls.

The thousands of cobbles that surrounded the dock have been lifted, individually cleaned and will be returned to create a large plaza at the front of the stadium cut-through by the old train tracks that were previously used for transporting goods from the dock. A large, currently dilapidated hydraulic tower will be restored and, Waldron hopes, will “have a cultural use within the site”.

MEMBER VOICE

Being a young business owner in turbulent times



“When things go wrong, the buck stops with me”

JAAVAD KHALIL MRICS
FOUNDER & MD, CONSULT NORTH

Starting a business at any age can be a daunting task, but doing so at 27 in a competitive and often turbulent industry like construction certainly presented its own unique challenges.

At the time, we were living through the COVID-19 pandemic and were between the second and third lockdowns in the UK. Rather than dwell on the reasons why I shouldn’t start, I decided to double down on the reasons why I should start. The fear of the unknown was ever-present, but so was the excitement of creating something entirely my own, in my home city of Newcastle. I’m now four years in and can honestly say I have never looked back.

The early days were a whirlwind of discovery. From learning how to manage finances and juggle cash flow to understanding the legalities of contracts and navigating client relationships, every day brought something new.

I had contributed to many businesses before, but working within a start-up meant wearing so many different hats. At the time, it was me, the business and the work. No finance director, no HR department, no compliance managers, no bid assistants and no PAs.

What surprised me most was how quickly I needed to shift from working in the business to working on the business. There’s a big difference between being an expert in your field and being a business owner.

Because I started Consult North at a relatively young age, there is often a moment of surprise when people meet me for the first time. Many expect a business owner in the construction sector to be older, perhaps with decades of experience behind them.

However, during my first graduate role, a client once thought I was 35 years old, 12 years older than I was at the time. It was either a reflection of how I had aged

or a testament to my hard work, passion and expertise – hopefully the latter!

Being my own boss

The greatest advantage of being my own boss is the control I have over my work. I get to shape the direction of the company, take on projects that align with my values, and build a team that shares my vision. It’s incredibly rewarding to see the direct impact of my decisions.

However, with great freedom comes great responsibility. When things go wrong, the buck stops with me. There have been late nights spent worrying about project deadlines, client expectations, or making payroll. The pressure can be immense, and maintaining a work-life balance is easier said than done. I can’t remember a holiday when I haven’t taken my laptop with me, but nor have I struggled to take a holiday.

How the ISG collapse has affected the construction industry

The collapse of ISG has sent ripples through the construction sector. As one of the largest players, its downfall has caused a shake-up that’s impacted clients, contractors, suppliers, and consultants.

It was only a week before ISG went into administration that I was sitting in a meeting where the client was taking a risk on an investment – something that is away from their core business – and ISG was being talked about as a potential contractor for the works. These events massively impact client confidence, the subcontracting landscape and appetite for work.

But as with any challenge, there’s also an opportunity to step up, adapt, and find new ways to provide value to clients in uncertain times. The road may be filled with obstacles, but each one presents an opportunity to learn and grow.



“The extent of the misinformation and misinterpretations that distorted the concept shocked me”

Carlos Moreno

WORDS BY GELA PERTUSINI AND MARK WILLIAMS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEXANDRE GAUDIN

When Carlos Moreno, scientific director at the IAE Paris Sorbonne Business School, first presented his concept of the 15-minute city in 2016, he could not have predicted the impact it would have.

Urban planners took to Moreno's idea in the spirit it was intended – how thoughtfully planned urban areas could improve the lives of those who live there. After all, having everything you could need for day-to-day life within a 15-minute walk or cycle of your front door sounds like a utopian ideal.

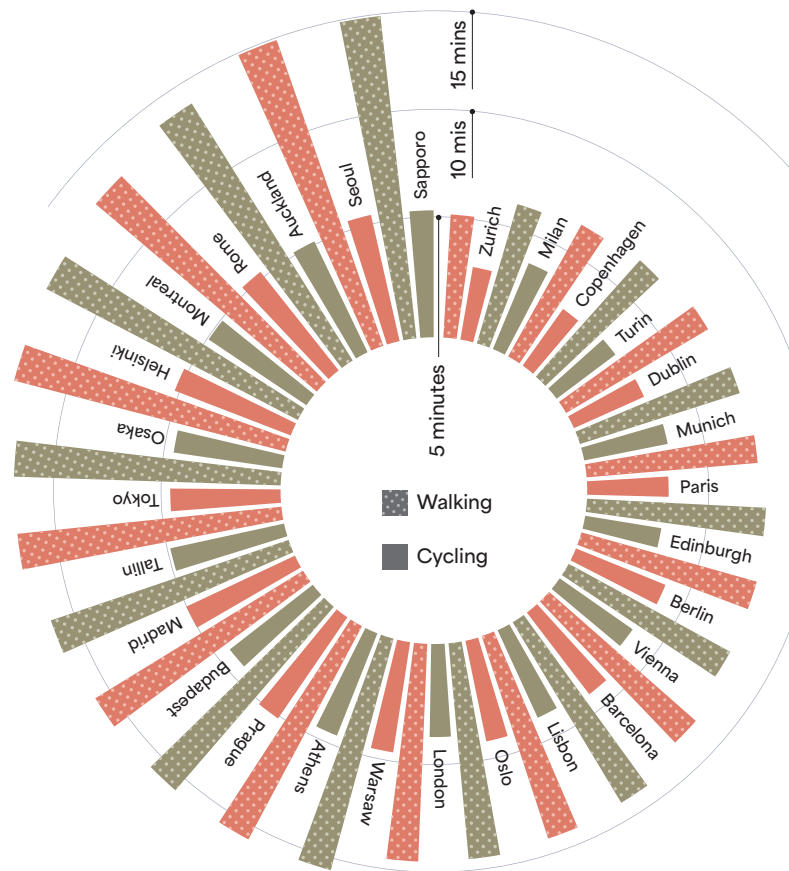
The concept didn't make big headlines when it was first introduced and quietly bubbled away in the mind of Moreno and those who read his work, gathering fans largely among academics and built environment professionals. Then Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris, used it as part of her successful re-election campaign in 2020, vowing to remove as many cars as possible from the French capital by getting people walking and cycling. It was an optimistic campaign of progressive and environmentally focused change ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympics. The key to this, she explained, was a rethinking of the city's neighbourhoods and “inventing a new history without forgetting its past”.

Parisians embraced the idea of the 15-minute city and grand plans to pedestrianise large areas of formerly car-choked districts, turning Paris into a city of less traffic and more trees.

The concept captured the imagination because it didn't require any special new technology or radical change to daily habits. “The idea is not ▶

↓
CITIES WITH A WALKING TIME OF UNDER 15 MINUTES TO AMENITIES

From Auckland to Zurich, these destinations across the globe epitomise the 15-minute city ethos thanks to their amenities being within easy, car-free reach of their residents*



“The environment is one of the pillars of the 15-minute city”

CARLOS MORENO
 SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR AT THE IAE PARIS SORBONNE BUSINESS SCHOOL

to continue to go faster and further, but to ask why we need to travel long distances,” says Moreno. “My answer was to propose living in a happy proximity.”

The age of misinformation

When the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated lockdowns began in early 2020, the 15-minute city concept was reported on by a broader range of media outlets and became more widely known. Commuting was suddenly no longer necessary for millions of people, which made the concept even more viable.

“COVID-19 radically transformed our urban lifestyle in a short time because we were constrained to work differently,” says Moreno. “We had to work at home, develop new technologies to communicate with friends and families and didn’t have any choice but to explore our locality.”

The pandemic helped to make the case for the 15-minute city but it also provided the Petri dish in which conspiracy theories around it would grow. It was pulled into the realm of feverish online speculation involving the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) Great Reset, anti-lockdown sentiment and misinformed ideas about state control of our movements. To the conspiracists, a 15-minute city meant not being allowed to travel more than 15 minutes from your home, which was absolutely not the case.

All of this made Moreno a target for a lot of abuse and even threats on his life.

“The extent of the misinformation and misinterpretations that distorted the concept shocked me,” says Moreno. “But what surprised me most was the violence and hatred of these groups, their insults and attacks on my history, my work and my person.

“These are fertile times for populism, climate scepticism and conspiracies. In the 12th century, the Andalusian sage Averroes said: ‘Ignorance breeds fear, fear breeds hatred, hatred breeds violence.’ It’s still the same equation nine centuries later.”

However, Moreno remained undeterred and even published a book on the subject called, unsurprisingly, *The 15-Minute City*. And as Moreno points out, the global scientific community mobilised to fact-check a lot of the nonsense online, while many local authorities worldwide began to implement elements of the concept. It also won the 2021 Obel Award – an international prize that promotes architecture in the service of people and the planet, given by the Henrik F Obel Foundation in Denmark.

15-minute cities are everywhere

A huge number of people around the world already live in 15-minute cities without necessarily realising it. The urbanism journal *Nature Cities* recently



published an online database of 10,000 cities and measured the access by foot and bicycle to various points of interest that people need to live their daily lives. These include outdoor activities, groceries, healthcare and schools. As a rule of thumb, European cities score much higher than their US counterparts on a lot of the requirements needed for a 15-minute city. “Several cities worldwide are already embracing elements of the 15-minute city concept,” says Moreno. “Of course, I’m talking about Paris and Milan, pioneer cities, but we also have Oxford in the UK, which has courageously been at the forefront, Dublin in Ireland, Athens in Greece, and a small town like Pleszew in Poland with 15,000 inhabitants. The list goes on.

“We have a European programme, Driving Urban Transitions (DUT), which focuses on this theme – dozens of towns and cities are participating.”

As with many urban-planning ideas, such as low-traffic neighbourhoods, most people quickly get used to them as a part of their local landscape and even appreciate the positive change to their lives. In the case of the 15-minute city, that positive change might be more bicycle infrastructure or better air quality because of a reduction in car journeys. An important byproduct of the 15-minute city is that it encourages more sustainable living.

“The environment is one of the pillars of the 15-minute city because it demands that we adapt our urban way of life to the concerns of sustainable development, biodiversity, the fight against climate change – but that also creates a better way of living,” says Moreno.

“In Paris, for example, we have been changing urban areas into places that can be used for growing fruit and vegetables, not to become self-sufficient but to develop social links and to develop a more peaceful city. It makes the city more sustainable, but it makes it a better place for its residents, too.”

When asked what advice he would give to policymakers, urban planners and community leaders who are interested in implementing the 15-minute city concept in their own cities or neighbourhoods, Moreno has a four-step answer. “They need to keep in mind that this is a vision for a better society that requires both effective short-term actions and long-term solutions,” he says.

“Firstly, it is important to prioritise community engagement and participatory planning processes to ensure that diverse voices are heard and considered. Secondly, invest in sustainable infrastructure, prioritising active transportation modes and green spaces. Thirdly, foster collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses and residents, to co-create inclusive and resilient urban environments.

“Finally, continuously evaluate and adapt strategies based on feedback and evolving urban dynamics to ensure the long-term success and relevance of the 15-minute city concept.” ■

This feature contains quotes and material from two exclusive Modus interviews with Carlos Moreno that can be found online at ww3.rics.org/modus

*SOURCE: A UNIVERSAL FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUSIVE 15-MINUTE CITIES BY MATTEO BRUNO ET AL

Creating a low-carbon materials economy

Can policy, industry and education foster a low-carbon materials future?

WORDS BY PROFESSOR ROBERT HAIRSTANS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SEÑOR SALME

How can we overcome barriers to the wider use of low-carbon materials in construction and avoid being stuck in a high-carbon pathway? This is an important question given the impact of construction and the built environment on climate change.

Without rapid change to the materials, design and practices used, the global construction sector faces a risk of increasing emissions as it grows to meet demand for urban environments.

Here are eight ways we can enable a low-carbon materials economy.

1 / Meet global demand for developed urban environments

According to the UN, global population could peak at nearly 11bn in 2100. To accommodate more people in better developed environments, the total built space in the world is expected to double by 2060, resulting in severe pressures on land. The impact of climate change will not only alter how buildings need to respond to extreme weather events, but it will also play a major role in the types of trees and crops that we grow and demand.

The UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) *Emissions Gap Report 2023* says

global emissions must be reduced by more than 50% by 2030 to be on track for the 1.5°C warming goal. As part of this equation, reducing embodied carbon is critical to reducing our environment impact. Embodied carbon is predicted to account for just under 50% of building emissions by 2050, according to the UN Global Alliance for Building and Construction.

There should be more availability of naturally renewable materials (those that replenish to replace the amount depleted by usage) and sequester carbon, as is the case with timber. A sustainable built environment needs a closer relationship with natural materials, moving away from

“Global emissions must be reduced by more than 50% to be on track”

the current linear supply chain interaction to a more symbiotic relationship.

2 / Circularity must underpin a sustainable relationship with the natural world

Circularity will be a key requirement in the future. This not only applies to how we design, manufacture and assemble new build housing and infrastructure, but also how we upgrade existing buildings and infrastructure. A key challenge for the sector will be how to maximise the value return from materials and resources used before they go anywhere near landfill.

The operational performance of assets is important as this reduces energy requirements and carbon impacts. However, the materials used to create these improvements, either in building fabric upgrade (primarily insulation) or renewable energy (eg solar photovoltaic), have an environmental impact.

Environmental impacts resulting from the necessary material extraction, transportation and production processes must be understood. Consideration of this embodied carbon in materials will be critical in the decision-making process.

Building performance upgrades need to be specified with consideration of whole-life carbon performance. Given the complexity of the decision-making process, digital twin modelling will also be necessary. Digital twins can ensure accurate information is available for every project, taking account of local supply chains and environmental impact, as well as correlating the predicted operation performance with actual performance.

3 / Create policy that supports a whole systems approach

Government policy is now being shaped to encourage the uptake of sustainable construction materials and this is largely driven by the need to reduce embodied carbon impacts. The UK government's *Timber in Construction* roadmap is one example of this, and there are similar policies in European countries including France, Sweden and Switzerland.

Whether these policies are timber specific or require a reduction in use of carbon-intensive materials, there is a move towards whole-life thinking. ▶



4 / Learn from the Paris Olympics

As part of the 2024 Paris Olympics, France Bois 2024 was a project launched to promote and increase the use of timber in the construction and development of the new and existing Olympic facilities. This also enabled the Games to reach their climate neutrality goals. The newly constructed athlete's village takes a hybrid construction approach and uses 45% timber, and has resulted in 73 new apartments across three projects.

5 / Set ambitious sustainability targets

In 2005, Sweden adopted a national wood-building strategy with the aim that 30% of all new buildings within 10-15 years should use a wood frame and that the number of buildings made out of wood increase by 30% within five years.

Stockholm Wood City (Trästad) is the latest project. Trästad is an association aiming to increase timber in construction to achieve the European climate goals. The proposed development will be the world's largest mass-timber project, with 7,000 office spaces and 2,000 homes. The district will feature nature-informed elements and be designed to have the feel of a forest. This development will break ground in 2025, with the first buildings set to be completed in 2027.

6 / Adopt a different mindset now

The industry requires transformative change to enable climate-responsible built environments. Responding to these challenges must start now or it will be too late for future generations.

The construction industry should no longer accept the lowest cost or quality and no longer only consider operational performance standards. A whole-systems approach goes beyond net zero carbon. It embraces circularity and takes full cognisance of the broader environmental impacts, such as the methods of extraction and the impacts on biodiversity. An example of this approach in action is Sweden's first fossil fuel-free preschool.

7 / Share the risks and rewards of a whole-life carbon approach

A cultural shift towards collaborative approaches is required in the construction



“Responding to challenges must start now or it will be too late”

industry, with shared risk and reward through the procurement and delivery processes. One example of a delivery model is the UK Green Building Council's Integrated Project Insurance, which creates an improved environment for shared risk and reward. This type of collaborative procurement and delivery model will become increasingly necessary with the move towards whole-life carbon thinking.

8 / Embrace innovative procurement methods

Another example of alternative procurement practices is the Edinburgh Home Demonstrator project, which is a collaboration of academia, government and industry designed to accelerate the transfer of knowledge. It transforms research into practical application, testing a new business model for building affordable, net zero homes to realise the ambition of the Edinburgh and south-east Scotland City Region Deal housing programme.

Achieving – and going beyond – net zero requires innovation to be fast tracked into practice and this is only going to be feasible by such collaborative approaches. The sector needs to embrace innovative models for collaboration and have the collective capabilities necessary to deliver and upgrade existing assets using new methods and regenerative approaches that don't impinge on the climate or ecological systems in the same way as they do today.

Societal shifts have seen the human population move increasingly from rural to urban environments formed from carbon-intensive materials. The impact of construction practices and our current built environment on climate change must be understood by the wider public.

This information can help foster acceptance for the shifts in approach that will be necessary to bring the way we live into alignment with the natural environment (consuming less than is produced to sustain how we live).

Doing so would unlock social, environmental and economic benefits, including job and wealth creation, human capital and nature-inspired places to sustain communities in a changing world. ■

Professor Robert Hairstans

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What effect will Tate Modern overlooking judgment have?

Comment While the Supreme Court found against the Tate Modern gallery for overlooking neighbouring apartments, the nuanced ruling may not set a precedent

WORDS BY DAVID GREENWOOD AND ARPAN GUPTA

IN FEBRUARY 2023, the Supreme Court's decision in *Fearn and others v Board of Trustees of the Tate Gallery* [2023] UKSC 4, which concerned a private nuisance claim by overlooked apartment owners (<https://bit.ly/FearnTate>), raised more than one or two eyebrows among property developers and owners. However, it remains to be seen whether the judgment will open the floodgates to similar kinds of claim.

Residents' objections initially rejected

The claimants were the residents of four apartments in the Neo Bankside development in London, built between 2006 and 2012.

The apartments boasted floor-to-ceiling windows, and were adjacent to the Tate Modern's 2016 extension. This included a top-floor gallery walkway around four sides, which offered the visiting public an unrestricted view of the London skyline. The claimants objected, however, because the walkway allowed visitors to see directly into their homes. They also claimed that there were many instances of the public taking photographs of the apartments' interiors, and using binoculars to peer inside.

The claimants sought an injunction against the Tate Modern Gallery, arguing that:

- the viewing gallery was an unreasonable interference with their enjoyment of the apartments, and constituted a nuisance
- this was an infringement to their right to privacy under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The English High Court found against the claimants, however, rejecting their argument for nuisance and breach of privacy. The court held that overlooking could amount to an actionable nuisance, but that in these circumstances the claim for nuisance was not made out.

The court reached this decision on the basis that the defendant's use of the property as a public viewing terrace was reasonable and that – in buying apartments with floor-to-ceiling windows – the claimants had 'created or submitted themselves to a sensitivity to privacy'. The court also ruled that the claimants could have taken remedial measures such as fitting net curtains or reflective film, or lowered their fitted solar blinds.

The claimants appealed but the Court of Appeal dismissed them, maintaining that

mere overlooking is not capable of giving rise to a claim of nuisance in these circumstances. The court also held that it was for Parliament to legislate further in relation to overlooking rather than extending the law of nuisance.

Rulings negated on nuisance grounds

However, when the claimants again escalated their case, the Supreme Court overturned both the previous rulings – albeit only by a majority of 3:2, so very much a split decision.

The Supreme Court noted that the viewing of the claimants' apartments by those in the walkway went far beyond anything that could reasonably be regarded as a necessary or natural consequence of the common and ordinary use of the defendant's land. Following this logic through, the court clearly felt that erecting and promoting an express viewing platform was an extraordinary use of the land. One might assume that the decision would have been different where the neighbouring property just had like-for-like floor-to-ceiling windows that overlooked the claimants' apartments.

Indeed, the Supreme Court agreed with the Court of Appeal that parties cannot complain

of nuisance simply because their apartment is overlooked by another building – no doubt keen to avoid creating a potentially widely applicable precedent in situations where one building block overlooks another.

In this specific case, however, the gallery – as the defendant – had invited members of the public to look out from a terrace from which they could see into the claimants' apartments, and had allowed this activity to continue without interruption. It was thus beyond doubt that the visual intrusion from the gallery walkway caused a substantial interference with the ordinary use and enjoyment of the apartments.

Court says give and take is necessary

The court also agreed that floor-to-ceiling windows are a common feature of high-rise buildings. It noted that the occupier of an apartment high above ground level must recognise the possibility that a building of similar height could be constructed nearby, from which occupants might be able see through their windows.

Therefore, the court held, there must be some give and take between neighbours when the use of the neighbouring land is 'ordinary'.

Furthermore, the fact that the properties had been designed and built in a way that made them particularly sensitive to inward view could not increase the liabilities of neighbours.

However, as noted above, the exposed nature of the apartments was not a defence against a nuisance claim where the defendant was not using the land in a common or ordinary way. In other words, a defendant cannot shift the burden and argue that an overlooked neighbour would not have suffered the nuisance if their property were less sensitive or constructed differently.

The court therefore disagreed with the High Court that the claimants should have taken measures to avoid being seen, such as closing their blinds. It reasoned that it was unacceptable to place the burden on the victim to mitigate the impact of the nuisance caused by a special use of the defendant's property.

The Supreme Court did not determine whether the claimants would be entitled to an injunction, injunction and damages, or damages instead of an injunction; this issue was remitted to the Chancery Division of the High Court to determine. However, the issue was not subsequently determined because Tate

The court reasoned it was unacceptable to place the burden on the victim to mitigate the impact of nuisance caused by a special use

Modern agreed that the relevant viewing gallery would be operated in a different manner, so as not to cause nuisance. As a result, the High Court proceedings were disposed of.

Case clarifies likely response to claims

The case raises some interesting issues, and provides helpful guidance on the way the courts may approach private nuisance claims in future.

The test for private nuisance boils down to whether the land is being used for a common and ordinary purpose. It seems unlikely that ordinary, residential properties will fail this test – when, for example one apartment overlooks another or an office block – and for that reason the judgment may not have the far-reaching impact that some are predicting. Nervous property developers and asset owners can take some comfort in this, and the clear commentary that mere overlooking does not amount to private nuisance.

However, this judgment will invariably lead investors and developers to pay closer attention to the full impact that a potential development may have on neighbouring properties. Equally, where properties are, or could be, overlooked, developers and owners may choose to add further privacy features to their design.

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Related competencies include:
Legal/regulatory compliance





Technology must supplement surveyors – not supplant them

Opinion Although advances in technology have made it much easier for surveyors to collect data and report to clients, the value of our advice still depends on our professional expertise

WORDS BY ADRIAN TAGG MRICS

AS TECHNOLOGY HAS advanced through the 21st century, surveyors have been able to speed up data collection and report their findings to clients in new ways. At the same time, though, we should be careful before we surrender control of our tasks to digital tools – after all, who would subcontract any part of their work without also disclaiming liability?

It is critical to remember that surveyors are highly trained practitioners, whose value is in providing credible, evidence-based advice for which they take responsibility – and the associated liability. The technology is simply there to help them.

Techniques evolve with construction

Advances in construction technology have also led to new surveying techniques and new ways of advising clients.

Although all buildings have a structure, envelope, services and finishes, the materials and methods of construction have advanced significantly beyond the mid-Victorian low-rise properties that were common when RICS was established. Our techniques must therefore adapt as well – and such adaptation can often entail the use of technology.

GETTY

For instance, cavity walls were introduced in the late 19th century to combat penetrating damp, but with time the ties used to secure the walls together began to fail. In response, endoscopy has been adopted to support investigations, enabling surveyors to pinpoint the source of problems.

Understanding that new construction methods necessitate new means of investigation goes some way to justifying the increasing number of drone surveys to inspect high-rise properties, where there are many inaccessible areas or features. Previously, surveyors assessed low-rise pitched roofs externally from ground level, supplementing their findings with an internal loft inspection. But increased building heights, accessibility issues and associated risk have prompted the use of drones to collect data.

RICS recognises the value of technology, but also the importance of thinking about the way it is used. For instance, section 4.1.1 of the current edition of the *Planned preventative*

Members are, as professionals, liable for the advice they give

maintenance professional standard emphasises that members must be trained and competent to use technology as well as being aware of its limitations. Professional opinions will always be crucial.

Processes rely on correct documents

In addition to physical inspection, document reviews form an important part of the surveying process. They can be particularly helpful in establishing the material specifications, construction detailing or operating requirements for buildings.

With the use of software, legal or technical advisers are increasingly able to share the entire as-built file for a property online, placing it in a digital or virtual data room. However, this does nothing to speed up the meticulous process and time required to analyse the information, which is typically necessary for the purpose of technical due diligence (TDD).

In contrast, while reviewing paper documents from filing cabinets may sound old-fashioned, lack of documentation represents a significant risk in giving appropriate advice. This is particularly critical in acquisitions where the window to conduct due diligence is often tight.

If practitioners need to locate this information, virtual data rooms must have a standard format

with a list of key documents, rather than being labyrinths of random scans uploaded by administrative staff who know little about their relevance.

This may be where artificial intelligence (AI) could be helpful, enabling the effective auditing of the format and completeness of an online data room or encouraging the implementation of standard formats.

At the moment, though, digital data rooms are simply being imposed on surveyors by legal advisers or other stakeholders wanting to complete transactions at speed. Practitioners are often obliged to confirm that they have had access to all relevant documents when in fact they have had insufficient time to find – let alone review – them.

Accordingly, surveyors are structuring their client instructions and scopes of work to include limitations depending on the availability of documents and the time permitted to review them. Yet this only succeeds in removing the diligence from TDD.

Digital findings need critical context

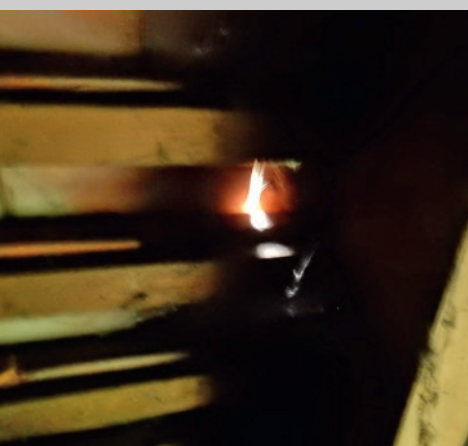
Ultimately, members are, as professionals, liable for the advice they give – and this is particularly pertinent with the rise of AI. ▶



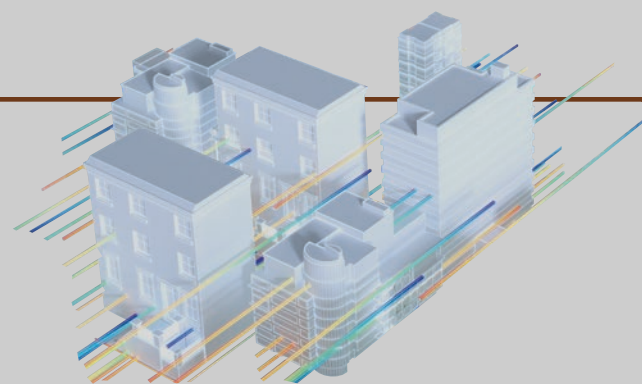
Slipped and loose roof tiles



Frost damage



Damaged tiles



As my boss explained to me early in my career building pathology is about the context, cause and effects of defects

My experience in academia is that AI can write adequate essays. But when it comes to applying knowledge or answering practical questions – which require an understanding of building type, age, material or construction technology as well as the symptoms of defects – the technology currently struggles to offer the correct advice, let alone supply a trail of evidence. In the short term, therefore, it cannot replace building surveyors.

As my boss explained to me early in my career when I was charged with taking the department's damp meter out on a survey, building pathology is more than observational: it is all about the context, cause and effects of defects.

Therefore, flying a drone with AI capabilities around a site – for instance – may well pick up evidence of numerous loose and slipped roof tiles. But drones and AI cannot independently enter a roof space themselves to establish the root cause of such defects.

External observation of a low-rise traditional property from ground level shows slipped or loose roof tiles (see photo above left). But the survey needs an internal inspection to determine that frost attack (see photo centre left) and delamination of the tile-fixing nibs has made them susceptible to wind damage and material failure (see photo below left).

One frequent observation of drone use in particular is that it can generate hundreds or even thousands of similar-looking images – so it is up to the surveyor to direct the pilot to areas of concern to collect the information they want.

Clients may expect drone surveys as the norm. However, we need to remind them that the findings will be largely irrelevant if there is no context. This means that surveyors are needed to interrogate the images or information forensically.

Similarly, while pre-populated drop-down menus of defects may speed up data collection

and ensure that reports are consistent, a surveyor must also understand the science or pathology of these defects. Free text input fields are therefore essential for them to supply such context.

There is little value in detailing the presence of spalled brickwork without intrinsically establishing the cause of moisture penetration that is one of the key factors behind it, for example. This is where it is necessary to provide credible, evidence-based advice.

Technology use needs understanding

There is no doubt that the uptake of technology has enhanced the surveying profession. It has improved efficiency and consistency, and its prevalence in the surveying process will only increase in the future.

Despite this trend, technology should simply be regarded as a tool to help collect data and inform the advice that surveyors give, or even to display survey findings through dashboards. It can also be vital in taking measurements such as dampness or dimensions with pinpoint accuracy.

The responsibility ultimately rests with the users: surveyors need to recognise that it doesn't matter what technology you have, but that it is more important to understand why and how you use it.

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Related competencies include: Building pathology, Construction technology and environmental services, Inspection



Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommends major reforms

The recent Grenfell Tower Inquiry phase 2 report encourages the construction industry and government to make wide-ranging changes to practice and regulation alike

WORDS BY DAVID MCCULLOGH FRICS

THE GRENFELL TOWER Inquiry phase 2 report published in September is a detailed document (<https://bit.ly/GTph2rep>), reflecting the penetrating nature of the inquiry. All the team should be congratulated on the thoroughness of their work.

The report describes a series of serious shortcomings across building design and construction – most of them due to a lack of competence on the part of those involved in the tragedy, but some a result of dishonesty. Industry and government must address all these shortcomings and ensure that, where

avoidable, such incidents are not allowed to happen again.

The report is split into seven volumes, with 14 parts totalling 113 chapters and three appendices. Part 14 sets out the inquiry's 58 recommendations for change, and prime minister Sir Keir Starmer promised in September that the government would respond to these within six months.

To address these recommendations, bodies such as RICS will need to support industry and government in implementing new approaches that are robust and efficient.

RICS has already run two webinars – which are available to members on demand (ola.rics.org) – to inform professionals about the inquiry's recommendations.

One particular recommendation is for the Home Office to reconsider its guidance on personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) in *Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats* (<https://bit.ly/HOfiresaf>). It had originally declared in 2022 that it was too difficult to ensure that PEEPs were in place for every individual who needed one, so it should not be a statutory duty for building owners to produce such plans. This, I understand, is currently under review, particularly in relation to those with disabilities.

The inquiry's direct recommendations for the industry concern two specific points. The first is for the Architects Registration Board to review its requirements to ensure professional competency is improved in relation to fire safety. The other is for the British Standards Institution to clarify whether the water flow coefficient of hydrants should be measured at the point of manufacture or in the completed building on site, to ensure that there is adequate pressure for firefighting operations.

More rigorous regime urged

The inquiry's recommendations to the government itself not only contain proposals on regulation but also on licensing dutyholder roles such as fire engineers and fire risk assessors, as well as contractors working on higher-risk buildings.

RICS is committed to taking a full role in helping the government and industry respond effectively to the inquiry-identified shortcomings over the next few months, and has been doing so extensively in the seven years since the tragedy. Readers are invited to make their views about the report known by contacting the RICS Fire Safety Working Group (knowledge@rics.org).

For more must-read articles, visit www3.rics.org/built-environment-journal

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Related competencies include: Ethics, Rules of Conduct and professionalism, Fire safety, Inspection



- an overview of a property project life cycle, and the points at which RICS members are involved
- reference to external resources that provide additional guidance.

The glossary in particular will help avoid misuse of language in the profession. For instance, the terms energy efficiency and retrofit are often misused: whereas the former includes everything you could do to a building to improve its energy performance, including retrofitting, retrofit itself only relates to adding features to a building that it did not have when it was constructed.

Design and specification professional standard, UK, 2nd edition

An update to the 2013 edition, this standard will take into account recent regulatory and legislative changes, updating best practice guidance relevant to design and specification for small to medium-sized construction projects.

Subsidence in relation to insurance claims practice information, 2nd edition, UK

This document will update the first edition guidance note on subsidence of 2011, covering new case law, protocols and processes developed over recent years.

The summer of 2022, one of the driest on record, resulted in a surge in subsidence claims, particularly in residential properties in the South East of England but also other areas where there are shrinkable subsoils. The new edition therefore aims to ensure that our members remain up to date with current best practice, and to offer a source of information for others who may inspect properties and need to recognise subsidence and how it should be dealt with.

PRACTICE ESSENTIALS

Certificate of building surveying practice - online course

This course equips you with essential knowledge in construction technology, contract administration, building pathology and regulatory compliance, preparing you for key responsibilities in this multidisciplinary field.

Find out more about this and other courses at [rics.org/training-events](https://www.rics.org/training-events)

Upcoming conferences

UK & Ireland dilapidations conference, March 2025

UK & Ireland building surveying conference, May 2025

To find out more about these and other events, please visit [rics.org/conferences](https://www.rics.org/conferences)

Note, dates are provisional. Please check online for updates.

Building surveying and building control standards and guidance

Forthcoming publications

Conservation of heritage buildings and assets professional standard, 2nd edition, global

The standard will set out requirements for surveys, reports, inspections and adaptive reuse of all traditional and historic buildings. It will also explain how to provide a high-quality professional service in the heritage sector, focusing on the unique procedures and technical competence this requires. The document will in addition play an important part in the conservation accreditation process for RICS-certified historic building professional status.

Sustainability practice information, 1st edition, global

The document aims to ensure all surveying disciplines have a base level of knowledge in sustainability that they can apply throughout the property life cycle. It will contain:

- a glossary of terms

PGP deputy chair's message

Collaboration with RICS setting solid foundations for future generations



PANEL DEPUTY CHAIR HELEN MCKEOWN MRICS

The 12 members of the building surveying and building control professional group panel (PGP) have had a busy year since their inaugural meeting in November 2023, where we discussed ideas and set the broader priorities and key issues for the year ahead.

Indeed, 2024 proved to be a busy 12 months. Many of our priorities continue to expand, extending into 2025, both in the UK and around the world. This follows successful collaboration with the various RICS teams on numerous initiatives, including:

- constructive feedback to the team leading the entry and assessment review for building surveying and building control competencies and the APC process, which is particularly timely following the publication of the report from phase 2 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry in September
- increasing members' awareness of the competence frameworks to be implemented in the foreseeable future, including incorporation of the technical skill sets for conservation, sustainability, net-zero carbon and fire safety
- reviewing the impact of the Building Safety Act 2022 and secondary legislation, including issues currently faced by building control professionals
- suggestions for improved careers engagement in conjunction with the early engagement team, helping its efforts to inspire the next generation of surveyors to address the skills crisis
- providing feedback on various professional standards and guidance notes, including

Our priority this year is to broaden our focus and engage further with the building surveying and building control community

a technical review of the update to the *Cladding for surveyors* practice information, among others.

Our priority this year is to broaden our focus and engage further with the building surveying and building control community with support from RICS. We want to seek your views and responses to the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead as we strive to lay the foundations for a stronger profession for future generations.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Representatives sought for GC

RICS Governing Council (GC) needs building surveyor and building control surveyor representation. Please email governanceappointments@rics.org to express your interest, to find out more, and to engage with RICS to raise the big issues facing our profession.

Dilapidations event due in March

RICS' dilapidations conference is due to take place on 18 March, and will focus on updating specialists in the field about the latest commercial property market trends and critical skills.

Principal designer training planned

RICS is developing a training course for principal designers under the Building Regulations, which aims to upskill the profession on requirements introduced in the Building Safety Act 2022.

The modules are linked directly to PAS 8671: 2022 *Framework for competence of individual principal designers*, and include:

- behavioural competence
- legislative and regulatory framework for compliance
- management of design work compliance
- technical framework for compliance.

A fifth module relates specifically to higher-risk buildings, reiterating the content of the four above but with particular focus on such buildings.



For further key sector insights, visit [ww3.rics.org/built-environment-journal](https://www3.rics.org/built-environment-journal)



How can social housing meet the real needs of older people?

Age-friendly housing is a big challenge for the UK residential sector – but the development of a Manchester co-housing scheme shows older people can have meaningful input into new communities

WORDS BY MARK HAMMOND AND NIAMH KAVANAGH

LIKE MUCH OF the developed world, the UK has an ageing society. The growing number of older people living in the UK (see Figure 1) has significant and widespread implications for the housing sector, including an increased need for new and existing homes to be more accessible, and changing lifestyle aspirations that are not met by our current housing stock.

Yet for some time, older people have been largely peripheral to debates on improving housing supply. There has been no national strategy for older people's housing since Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods – launched by Gordon Brown's Labour government in 2008 – was formally discontinued in the 2012 *Housing standards review*.

Market misunderstands older people

A challenge we face in the housing sector is that older people are often underrepresented in mainstream housing planning. It is common for strategic regeneration frameworks and housing strategies to refer to first-time buyers, young families and professionals.

Where older people are mentioned, though, it is often only in reference to extra-care housing – an attractive typology for some, but one that is problematic for many others who don't wish to live in age-segregated housing.

There is also investment in the middle and upper-middle market of retirement communities, particularly in the south of England. In these areas, many older people can command higher prices for their homes, allowing them to afford moves into retirement communities that offer hotel-like levels of service provision, often with correspondingly high monthly service charges.

Again, there is no denying that there is a market for such housing, but it is important to recognise the diverse situations and motives that influence older people's experience of housing in later life. As a society we have created a narrative around an affluent baby boomer generation with the financial means to control their housing futures. However, this is not the universal experience.

Among older people, the cumulative effects of inequality and disadvantage across different stages of their lives compound as they age, leading to significant differences in life experience. According to the Office for National Statistics, life expectancy varies between the richest and poorest neighbourhoods in the UK by 23 years (<https://bit.ly/ONSlifeexp>). Meanwhile on average, people living in more

deprived areas can expect to spend twice as much of their lives in poor health.

These factors affect the desire of those aged 50 and older to move house (see Figure 2), while other relevant trends include:

- increased levels of divorce in later life (<https://bit.ly/ONS65mardiv>)
- greater job insecurity leading to changes in housing situations (<https://bit.ly/CfABjobsec>)
- a significant number of older LGBTQ+ people facing systemic challenges entering the market (<https://bit.ly/HLIN-LGBT>)
- more adult children who remain or return to their ageing parents' homes, with 4.8m adults in the UK now living in their parents' houses (<https://bit.ly/ONSadultshome>).

Together, these disrupt any simplistic ideas we might have around downsizing in later life.

Achieving genuinely age-friendly housing requires planners, developers and designers to adopt a more sophisticated and inclusive understanding of the older people who might live in the places we create.

Dedicated facilities need adaptability

The World Health Organization (WHO) developed the concept of age-friendly cities in 2007 to ensure that homes, neighbourhoods and cities improve the well-being of older people by promoting inclusivity and interdependency. The concept is grounded in the understanding that older people should have a determining influence on the places and societies in which they live, with more than 1,500 cities and municipalities globally adopting the model.

An important quality that underpins all age-friendly housing is that it adapts to the older people living there, not the other way round. It values older people as citizens with diverse tastes, desires, dispositions and identities, and allows them to express these in their day-to-day lives. This approach means as a minimum promoting the physical accessibility of homes, but also responding to factors that might exclude older people on financial, social or cultural grounds.

If we recognise the diversity of our older population's needs and aspirations, age-friendly housing can include specialist models; however, these models are not in themselves age-friendly if they are not provided in a way that allows interdependence, belonging and sociability to emerge.

Specialist older people's housing in the UK can be seen as a spectrum, offering a range of

Figure 1: Millions of people aged 50 and older, by type of tenure, England, 2001-21



Source: Ageing Better analysis of data from UK census 2001, 2011 and 2021

An important quality that underpins all age-friendly housing is that it adapts to the older people living there, not the other way round

choices depending on the level of care needs that residents might have. These include the following options.

- **Retirement communities:** these comprise age-restricted homes, often with communal facilities on site but not care support.
- **Integrated retirement communities:** sometimes called extra care or housing with care, these self-contained homes include communal and social spaces, as well as optional on-site care support that is available around the clock.

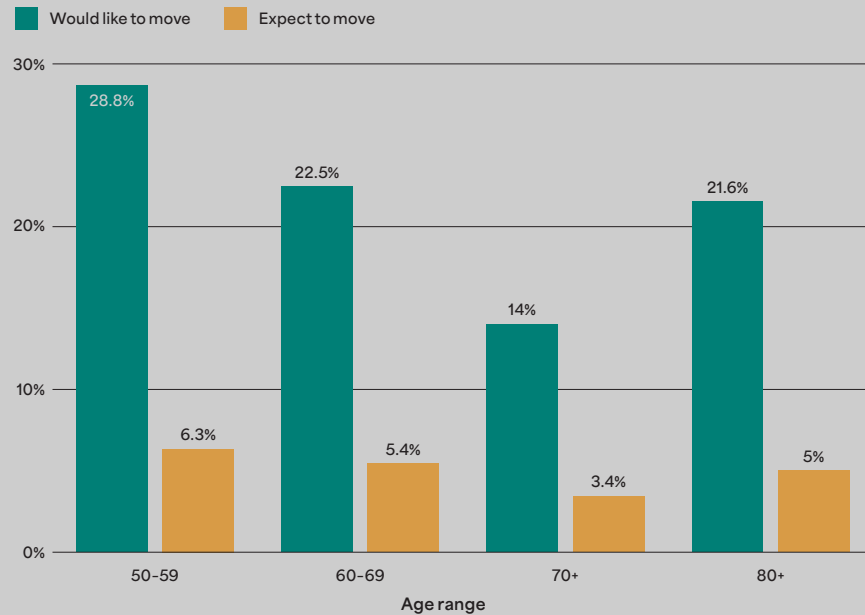
- **Care homes:** sometimes called nursing homes, such facilities offer communal living with higher levels of care and support, where residents occupy a bedroom and ensuite rather than having their own self-contained dwelling.

Recent examples such as Appleby Blue (<https://bit.ly/ApplebyBlue>) and the 2023 RIBA Stirling Prize-winning John Morden Centre (<https://bit.ly/JohnMorden>) exemplify the high standard of age-friendly specialist housing we are now seeing from some developers, as well as the diversity of options starting to become available in the UK.

Regular housing can be age-friendly

Equally, mainstream housing can and should aspire to create a good environment for older people, recognising the overwhelming desire among this demographic to live in mixed communities and the wider damage that age segregation in cities can cause. Ensuring that mainstream housing is age-friendly doesn't ▶

Figure 2: Percentage of people aged 50 and older who would like to move home and those who expect to do so in the next year, England, 2019



Source: Ageing Better analysis of data from Understanding Society, wave 10 (2018-19)

require extra investment; but it might require developers and designers to consider older people's needs more carefully, or preferably collaborate with them directly to ensure these are better understood.

This could encompass everything from the way a development is marketed through to the kitchen ironmongery. The *Framework for creating age-friendly homes in Greater Manchester 2021-2024* (<https://bit.ly/GMAFhomes>), developed by the GM Ageing Hub at Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), includes a series of points that might help any developer or designer interested in this agenda.

This notion of self-expression and self-actualisation is certainly the backbone of the high-end retirement communities we see, which heavily promote the active and sociable lifestyle that they can enable.

However, these opportunities should underpin our ambitions across all price points, including the social rented sector. Research conducted for the Co-creating age-friendly social housing project (<https://bit.ly/AFsochsg>), also in Greater Manchester, shows how this can be done.

Mainstream housing can and should aspire to create a good environment for older people

Trust collects input from older people

The project, established in 2022 using a research grant from the Dunhill Medical Trust, investigates different ways that housing associations can collaborate with older people to enable them to age well in the places they already live.

For the Co-creating age-friendly social housing project, Manchester School of Architecture, Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Manchester have partnered with the GMCA and three housing associations in the conurbation to pilot a series of innovative models informed by the WHO approach, which argues that older people themselves need to be at the

centre of making decisions that affect their quality of life.

One of the three pilot initiatives focuses on developing and establishing a socially rented co-housing community in collaboration with older tenants in south Manchester with the Southway Housing Trust. The trust was established in 2007 following a stock transfer from Manchester City Council, and today it owns and manages around 6,000 homes, primarily across four neighbourhoods in the south of the city.

In 2011, recognising that its tenant base was projected to become predominately older in the coming years, Southway began developing a specific workstream to create age-friendly neighbourhoods. Alongside improvements to streets and green spaces and a long-term programme aiming to improve social participation, the trust proactively expanded its housing stock for older people, including new extra-care developments and shared-ownership retirement apartments.

Acknowledging the wide range of aspirations and needs that older tenants had, the trust continued to seek opportunities to diversify its housing offer to such tenants, and in 2018 began work with Manchester School of Architecture to explore the potential for creating an age-friendly co-housing scheme.

Co-housing consists of private dwellings that are complemented by shared social spaces where residents collaborate to create a community that promotes social interaction. While the model is growing in popularity, and addresses the characteristics of an age-friendly approach to housing, most co-housing communities in the UK are not available to social tenants. Instead, they operate on a resident-led model, relying on owner-occupiers selling their homes to fund development costs.

Southway was keen to challenge this approach so it could understand how older social tenants might lead the development of new co-housing communities, and what processes groups would have to go through to achieve this. In December 2023, it began a communications campaign to inform older tenants about co-housing and invite them to join the project.

Twenty-three tenants responded to this call, with eight forming a core group who would move the project forward. This group meets regularly and is currently examining different examples of co-housing to explore how these might work for them in south Manchester.



The 2023 RIBA Stirling Prize-winning John Morden Centre

PHOTO © JIM STEPHENSON VIA RIBA AND ARCHDAILY

The researchers at Manchester School of Architecture have developed a series of creative methods to contribute to these discussions, including the use of storytelling combined with generative AI to create concept drawings that will spark conversation about tenants' vision for the community.

Critically, these approaches seek to foster a sense of community between tenants, recognising that, to succeed, the core group will need to form strong social bonds and learn to self-organise. This even extends to residents cooking food for the meetings rather than Southway ordering in catering.

As the project has progressed, it has been supported by GM Community Led Homes,

a community benefit society that provides advice and support. More detailed work to explore sites, funding options and management structures is due to begin later this year.

Collective effort can fulfil potential

Southway isn't alone in showing an interest in co-housing. Housing 21 has a strategy to develop ten co-housing communities in Birmingham, with a similar emphasis on making them available for those with limited financial resources.

Similarly, the UK Cohousing Network's report *Housing associations and cohousing* (<https://bit.ly/Cohsgrepts>) provides recommendations for ways that such associations

can support new and existing co-housing communities of all tenures. It aims to address the systemic development barriers that make provision of any kind of community-led housing so challenging in the UK.

Critically, socially rented co-housing exemplifies the potential for developers serving communities with limited financial means to offer attractive housing options for proactive older people, based on ideas of community, belonging and citizenship.

It is currently unclear what the new, Labour government's approach to housing older people will be, with the issue absent from both its election manifesto and public statements at the time of writing. The recently concluded Older People's Housing Taskforce will, however, provide an opportunity to kick-start the discussion in government.

The taskforce submitted its final report to government ministers the morning that the 2024 general election was called, with Angela Rayner's Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government obliged to respond to the findings and recommendations in the coming months.

While there is consensus that action must be taken, everyone should appreciate that realising age-friendly housing is a collective responsibility for the sector, not just something to be provided by specialist developers. All designers and developers should engage with the diverse needs and aspirations of an ageing society, because the private market will not by itself address engrained inequalities in later life.

Although social housing providers are undoubtedly under a lot of pressure, they would with the right support and incentives be well placed to lead the creation of diverse, inclusive places that support a good later life.

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Why professional judgement matters in valuations

With a concerning rise in valuation practitioners failing to carry out adequate due diligence, the need to apply professional judgement remains vital

WORDS BY CHARLIE JACKSON FRICS

RICS REGULATION HAS been seeing an increase in the number of cases where members have carried out valuation work with insufficient due diligence.

- For example, some valuers have:
- voluntarily dispensed with physical inspection of a property when this should have been carried out, and not adequately recorded their rationale for doing so
- failed to undertake the desktop enquiries that are reasonably expected of a professional adviser, which would have revealed issues material to value
- not taken reasonable action to verify the accuracy and reliability of information on which the valuation relies.

Valuations prepared without sufficient due diligence can be unreliable, and will thus undermine public and consumer confidence in the

Professional judgement in valuation involves a holistic approach, combining technical knowledge, market expertise and critical thinking to give reliable, accurate results

high professional and ethical standards that are expected of RICS members and regulated firms. For that reason, it is worth reiterating how and why RICS expects valuers to exercise professional judgement when carrying out instructions.

The new edition of *RICS Valuation – Global Standards* (Red Book Global Standards) is effective from 31 January 2025. But while this may set out the rules, if members are not following these as they should then a timely reminder can help them make proper sense of our standards.

Rules and Red Book set requirements

Rule 3 of RICS' *Rules of Conduct* demands that members and regulated firms provide a diligent, good-quality service. This includes seeking to understand clients' needs and objectives, and agreeing with them the scope of the service to be provided, its limitations and timescales.

RICS recognises that many valuers work under pressure in terms of time and fees; however, this does not justify curbing professional due diligence in circumstances where it is required.

Professional judgement requires that you analyse, evaluate and make decisions on the basis of your knowledge, skills, training and experience, in accordance with the standards, laws, regulations or principles applicable to your area of work, and in the best interests of your client and the wider public.

Consistency, objectivity and transparency are fundamental to building and sustaining public confidence and trust in valuation. This depends on valuers having the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and ethical behaviour to form

sound judgements and to report opinions of value clearly and unambiguously to clients and other valuation users, in accordance with globally recognised norms.

Red Book Global Standards, national supplements and jurisdiction guides contain:

- professional standards centred on ethics and conduct, which are underpinned by knowledge and competence
- technical standards centred on common definitions and conventions, which are underpinned by consistent application through recognised approaches
- standards for the quality of work to be performed, which centre on rigour in analysis and objectivity of judgement, backed by appropriate documentation and clarity when reporting, as well as standards that correspond with those set in the *Rules of Conduct*.

Although much of Red Book Global Standards is mandatory, some aspects do not direct or require any particular course of action. Instead, they set out fundamental principles and concepts that must be considered when undertaking a valuation.

A valuer's ability to apply sound professional judgement is critical, and it is therefore fundamental to the integrity of the valuation process that all RICS members practising in this field have the appropriate experience, skill and judgement for the task in question.

Exercising such professional judgement is an important aspect of valuation, and involves applying a combination of expertise, experience and sound reasoning to arrive at a reliable,

well-informed estimate of value. It is vital that RICS member valuers have the confidence and willingness to make decisions based on their own professional judgement, and not be influenced by the attitude of the client or others.

Valuation relies on particular factors

Key principles on the way professional judgement should be applied when carrying out a valuation – where the risks of getting it wrong for the client are greatest – are as follows:

- **Understanding valuation methods:** valuers should have a strong understanding of various methods, such as the market approach, income approach and cost approach. They should also have the knowledge and experience to choose the most appropriate method for the asset type and the valuation purpose, which itself will demand professional judgement. If the valuer does not have the requisite knowledge and experience then they should decline the instruction. Please refer to VPS 1 paragraph 3.1(g), implementation paragraph 2, and VPS 3 of Red Book Global Standards.
- **Market knowledge:** valuers must have a sound understanding of the local market, which includes knowledge of recent sales, market trends and the local factors that have an influence on values of the particular asset or liability type.
- **Analysis of comparable sales:** when using the market approach, valuers must exercise professional judgement in selecting and analysing comparable sales, also referred to as comps. They must use their experience-based

judgement to consider the similarities and differences between the subject property and the comps, making adjustments as needed to arrive at a reliable and justifiable valuation figure. The current edition of *Comparable evidence in real estate valuation* RICS professional standard gives more information on this.

- **Economic and environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors:** valuers should consider broader economic and ESG factors that may affect property values; for example, interest rates, economic indicators and any ESG-related matters that could affect the property. Please see VPGA 8 of Red Book Global Standards.
- **Assessment of unique property features:** unique property features may not fit neatly into standard valuation models. Professional judgement is necessary to assess how such features contribute to or detract from the property's overall value. Valuers must be prepared to explain and justify their reasoning.
- **Data verification:** valuers must verify the accuracy and reliability of the data used in the valuation process, such as information provided by clients and property owners and data from public records or other relevant sources. Professional judgement must be applied to assess the credibility of the information. This is covered in VPS 4 of Red Book Global Standards.
- **Consideration of market conditions:** markets are dynamic and can change. Professional judgement involves considering the current state of the market and making

adjustments to reflect any changes that may have an impact on values.

- **Legal and regulatory compliance:** valuers should ensure that their assessments comply with the law and applicable regulation. Professional judgement is used to interpret and apply relevant laws, standards and regulations in the valuation process.
- **Communication with stakeholders:** effectively communicating to clients and stakeholders the rationale behind valuation decisions also requires professional judgement. Valuers should be able to explain their methods, assumptions and any limitations in a clear and understandable manner, tailoring their communication to the maturity and sophistication of the client. Please see VPS 6 of Red Book Global Standards.
- **Continuing professional development (CPD):** staying informed about trends in the sector, changes in regulations and advancements in valuation methodologies is crucial. Professional judgement evolves with ongoing education and staying abreast of developments. The RICS CPD compliance guide gives information on how members must comply with CPD requirements.

It is clear then that professional judgement in valuation involves a holistic approach, combining technical knowledge, market expertise and critical thinking to produce accurate and reliable results. It requires a balance between applying established methods and adapting to the unique characteristics of each asset or liability and its market.

For more must-read articles, visit www3.rics.org/property-journal

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Application of professional judgement in valuation

To read more from Charlie on professional judgement in valuation from *Property Journal*, visit www3.rics.org/pjvaljudge

Commercial property standards and guidance

Forthcoming consultations

Code for leasing business premises professional standard, England and Wales, 2nd edition

The objective of this new edition is to improve the quality and fairness of negotiations on lease terms, and to promote the issue of comprehensive heads of terms that should make the legal drafting process more efficient.

The standard does not prescribe the outcome, but seeks to make it fair and balanced by identifying the terms that are usually important and encouraging both parties to obtain advice from property professionals. This enables negotiations to proceed properly, so that each party can make an informed decision about whether to do so on the terms that they negotiate.

The professional standard and the accompanying template heads of terms and checklist should be used as a reminder for negotiations before the grant of a new lease and at the time of any lease renewal. They should help RICS members ensure that the landlords, tenants and guarantors they are advising have a clear understanding of the commitments that they are making.

The code:

- provides assurance and clarity for occupiers, and is in keeping with RICS' public service remit
- promotes a less adversarial relationship between occupiers, owners and advisers
- encourages surveyors and lawyers to work more collaboratively
- encourages occupiers to take professional advice.

Code of measuring practice professional standard, UK, 7th edition

This standard, which applies to all building classes except offices and residential buildings, is being revised to keep members up to date and informed of changes in market practices in measurement, namely the following:

- to consider whether there should be specific comment on vertical measurement



- to ensure the standard appropriately reflects the evolution in buildings since the previous edition.

To contribute to these consultations, please visit [consultations.rics.org](https://www.rics.org/consultations)

Forthcoming publications

Service charges in commercial property professional standard, UK, 2nd edition

Aimed at commercial property managers and occupiers, this update promotes best practice, uniformity, fairness and transparency in the management and administration of service charges in commercial property.

It will help to:

- ensure that budgets and year-end certificates are issued in a timely manner
- encourage a reduction in the causes of disputes and, where these arise, provide guidance on resolution
- provide guidance to solicitors, their clients - whether owners or occupiers - and managers of service charges in the negotiation, drafting, interpretation and operation of leases, in accordance with best practice.

Digital risks in buildings practice information, global, 1st edition

The use of data and technology in the built environment offers many benefits for businesses and society, as well as buildings themselves. However, there are potential, previously unseen risks that come with this. These range from building hardware failing through to cyber security and data privacy.

The document aims to inform property professionals about the digital risks that buildings face, why these matter, and what measures they can take to mitigate them.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Podcast focuses on engagement

RICS head of professional practice for property Paul Bagust hosts a podcast conversation with professional group panel (PGP) members Maria Wiedner and Nella Pang about the make-up of the PGP, the areas they are engaging with RICS on, and the benefits of doing so.

To listen, please visit [rics.org/podcast](https://www.rics.org/podcast)

RICS feeds into high street inquiry

The government inquiry on high streets in towns and small cities, to which RICS has contributed, will seek to understand how these can be regenerated and become more resilient and attractive. It will consider different uses of high streets by various communities and businesses, and what is essential for them to flourish.

Business tenancy law under review

RICS is engaging with the Law Commission on a review of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. The review is considering in detail how the right to renew business tenancies, set out in Part 2 of the act, is working, and it will also explore options for reform.

PRACTICE ESSENTIALS

Certificate in property finance and investment

This course is designed to give practising real-estate and finance professionals the fundamental knowledge they need, including subjects from making basic financial models to learning about different sources of financing.

The content assumes that participants have a background in property, although they will not need any specific knowledge in property finance and funding before starting.

To find out more about this and other courses, please visit [rics.org/training-events](https://www.rics.org/training-events)

Residential property standards and guidance

Recently published

Property agency and management professional standard, global, 1st edition

Reflecting the changing nature of real estate and the work carried out by RICS members and RICS-regulated firms, this standard brings together the different agency and management disciplines in the property sector. It sets out high-level global principles governing the behaviour of professionals in residential, commercial and mixed-use real estate, across lettings, sales, facilities management and auctioneering. The standard is mandatory for RICS members and RICS-regulated firms and supports a new framework developed for property agency and management.

Two further professional standards are planned to support this document. Both will be aimed at UK property professionals, and detail best practice for those in property agency and in property management.

To read this, please visit [rics.org/standards](https://www.rics.org/standards)

Property auctions consumer guide, UK

Recognising the growth in auctions and the predominance of online platforms, this guide helps consumers understand what to expect when buying or selling through a firm whose directors are RICS-regulated.

To read, visit [rics.org/consumer-guides](https://www.rics.org/consumer-guides)

Consultations

Home survey standard professional standard, UK, 2nd edition

As the residential sector evolves, periodic review of this important standard is necessary. RICS is revising the standard to:

- meet member requirements
- provide a clear framework for qualified members and regulated firms
- consider consumer sentiment and developments in the sector
- account for third parties working with the standard in their respective areas
- reflect sectoral opportunities and risks.

To support the review, RICS conducted a member survey, focusing on areas that require revisions, additions or that are functioning well. The organisation is currently analysing feedback, along with the results of a survey of more than 1,400 UK homeowners' experiences. These will inform where improvements can be made to the standard, and a formal public consultation on an updated draft will help refine it.

To contribute to this consultation, please visit [consultations.rics.org](https://www.rics.org/consultations)

Forthcoming publications

Service charge residential management code professional standard, England, 4th edition

This standard is applicable to all freeholders, leaseholders and agents. It contains important best practice for landlords and managing agents in the context of leasehold property, as well as setting out mandatory requirements for surveyors who are working in this sector.

The standard forms the basis of consistent and effective management for residential leasehold blocks and estates across the sector regardless of where agents, and indeed flats, are located.

Updates include the following.

- Sections have been reordered and additions made to the glossary. Importantly, the definition of 'you' has also been revised: this term is used throughout the code and in previous editions has referred to agents acting on behalf of landlords, but now signifies all landlords regardless of whether they have appointed an agent. It is landlords who bear the most responsibility for ensuring that their buildings comply with the legislation to which the code refers.
- The processes for providing information to leaseholders in a planned and upfront manner have been streamlined to help landlords and agents.
- Requirements for agents and landlords to declare all commissions and justify these to leaseholders have been enhanced.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Panel participates in podcast

In a recent podcast, RICS senior specialist in property Mairead Carroll talked with professional group panel (PGP) members Daniel Underwood, Chris Hall, Vanessa Griffiths and Prof. Richard Fitton about the make-up of the panel and its engagement with RICS.

To listen, please visit [rics.org/podcast](https://www.rics.org/podcast)

Leasehold reform hub launched

RICS has created a hub of information on the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024, including a summary of the act, valuation considerations, links and FAQs.

To learn more, please visit [rics.org/lrhub](https://www.rics.org/lrhub)

Residential retrofit webinar series

Join our comprehensive course designed to equip professionals with the essential skills and knowledge to excel in retrofit projects. Our five web classes offer a detailed look at critical aspects of this field of practice.

To join, visit [rics.org/training-events](https://www.rics.org/training-events)

PRACTICE ESSENTIALS

Upcoming conferences

UK & Ireland Residential Property Conference, July 2025

To find out more about this and other events, please visit [rics.org/conferences](https://www.rics.org/conferences)

Note, date is provisional. Please check online for further details.



For more sector insights, visit www3.rics.org/property-journal

Valuation standards and guidance

Recently published

RICS Valuation - Global Standards (Red Book Global Standards)

The new edition of *RICS Valuation - Global Standards* (Red Book Global Standards), effective from 31 January, empowers members, valuation users and stakeholders to maintain high standards of service, meet client and regulatory demands, and produce accurate and compliant valuation reports for the public benefit and economic stability.

Following a member survey and public consultation, Red Book Global Standards have been updated as part of our commitment to support high quality in valuations worldwide and to future-proof practices in the public interest.

Valuations for real estate investment entities - A guide for clients and valuers

This guide summarises regulation and sectoral recommendations when commissioning and providing the regular valuations of real estate owned by collective investment schemes, investment trusts and pension funds, among others, in the UK.

Practical considerations for RICS valuers operating in the USA practice information, USA, 1st edition

Developed by US-based members with expertise of national and global valuation standards, this provides an overview of the practical considerations when undertaking valuations in the US.

To read these, please visit rics.org/standards

Consultations

Valuation of properties in multi-storey, multi-occupancy residential buildings with cladding professional standard, UK, 2nd edition

This update aims to ensure the criteria for requiring an external wall safety EWS1 form on buildings of four storeys or fewer remain proportionate.

To contribute to this consultation, please visit consultations.rics.org

Forthcoming publications

Valuation of licensed leisure property including public houses, bars, nightclubs and restaurants professional standard, UK, 2nd edition

RICS members and external stakeholders such as hospitality sector bodies, the government, pub tenants and owners, requested an update of the 2010 RICS guidance *Capital and rental valuation of public houses, bars, restaurants and nightclubs in England and Wales*.

The retitled standard will address the provision and consideration of professional advice in this sector, which can be complex. Parts of the market are highly regulated, and the aim is for coverage of the valuation process to be clear, concise and balanced.

Residential property valuation professional standard, UK, 1st edition

The aim of this standard is to establish for the first time clear, dedicated guidance for RICS valuers for the valuation of residential property in the UK, building on the principles set out in *RICS Valuation - Global Standards: UK national supplement*.

Valuation of medical centres and surgery premises professional standard, UK, 3rd edition

The UK medical centre market offers attractive opportunities for investors who are seeking stable, long-term returns with low risks.

- Updates include coverage of:
- legislative changes in the NHS Framework and British Medical Association guidance
 - sustainability and environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations
 - key variations in guidance between England and Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
 - further guidance on the practice of top-up rents in the sector
 - changing measurement practices.

The new edition also signposts updates to relevant RICS valuation guidance, including material on discounted cash flow and ESG.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New standards take effect

RICS has updated *RICS Valuation - Global Standards* (Red Book Global Standards; see left). The new edition, effective from 31 January, integrates recommendations from the Valuation Review, responds to environmental, social and governance considerations and technological advances, and aligns with the new International Valuation Standards.

Valuation features in RICS podcast

Among recent RICS podcast episodes, valuation professional group panel (PGP) chair Nick Knight chats with the panel's Rachel Wright about trends in valuation. Meanwhile, Ben Elder hosts a conversation with PGP members Dr Mona Shah, Chris de Gruben, Joshim Uddin and Alvah T. Beander on engaging with RICS. To listen, please visit rics.org/podcast

PRACTICE ESSENTIALS

Foundation in valuation methodology - online learning

Designed for professionals wanting a fundamental understanding of key valuation methods and best practice techniques for measurement and inspection, this eight-month distance learning course will enable you to assess the property market and identify and apply different types of valuation, and create reports in line with RICS best practice and international standards.

Other available courses

Certificate in commercial valuation methodology

Certificate in residential valuation methodology

Find out more about these and other courses at rics.org/training-events

Commercial property

Panel members help RICS to set priorities



PANEL CHAIR RODDY HOUSTON MRICS

I was delighted to be invited to chair the commercial property PGP, giving vice-chair Jonathan Theobald and myself a chance to work with enthusiastic members across the sector.

We represent 20,000 or so members globally and cover the full range of expertise they apply every day. Indeed, our panel includes agents, asset managers, estate strategists, fund and investment managers and property developers dealing with offices, retail and industrial premises, data centres, hotels and leisure facilities, public-sector property and more.

Our focus is to work with RICS staff to understand plans and activities already under way, suggest new priorities, and offer insight and member feedback. PGP members have influenced the organisation on issues and initiatives including:

- ongoing development and publication of updated and consolidated standards on property agency and management
- responding to government consultations and inquiries, such as those on high streets in towns and small cities, and on minimum energy efficiency standards for non-domestic properties
- developing the programme for the RICS commercial property conference.

The PGP has also been discussing far-reaching issues such as biodiversity net gain, the climate crisis and building resilience, energy efficiency and whole-life carbon assessment, as well as AI, data and proptech, and changing demand for different types of commercial real estate. We are helping RICS engage members on these, and would welcome constructive input. For more, please visit rics.org/grouppanels

Residential property

Experts give input on changing field of practice



PANEL CHAIR EMMA FLETCHER MRICS

Chairing the residential property PGP and supporting RICS with useful insight and member feedback is a privilege. The 13 PGP members range in expertise, dealing with estate agency, home surveys, valuation, retrofit, education, leasehold reform, litigation, insurance, viability and asset management.

The PGP has worked with RICS on key initiatives such as:

- updating the *Home survey standard* professional standard
- developing the *Residential retrofit* professional standard
- leasehold reform
- AI and the role of automated valuation models (AVMs)
- entry and assessments review
- policy changes made by the new UK government, including feeding back on the National Planning Policy Framework, energy strategy and the construction of more homes
- supporting the RICS residential property conference as speakers and hosts
- the government review of the regulation of property agents
- regular media updates and a PGP podcast
- promoting the four pillars of sustainability: biodiversity, circular economy, decarbonisation and resilience.

What is evident is that more highly skilled surveyors will be needed in the residential sector, to ensure correct, informed, accurate measurement and reporting of property as well as energy performance, carbon, air quality and even health.

It's an exciting time for the sector – and the perfect opportunity for surveyors to upskill and attract new members into the profession.

Valuation

Insight from PGP offers steer for organisation



PANEL CHAIR NICK KNIGHT MRICS

Working with highly knowledgeable members across the valuation profession makes my work chairing the valuation PGP a pleasure. Our expertise covers arts and antiques, plant, machinery and equipment, education and research, accounting valuations, affordable housing and development, investment valuation, valuations for secured lending, and much more.

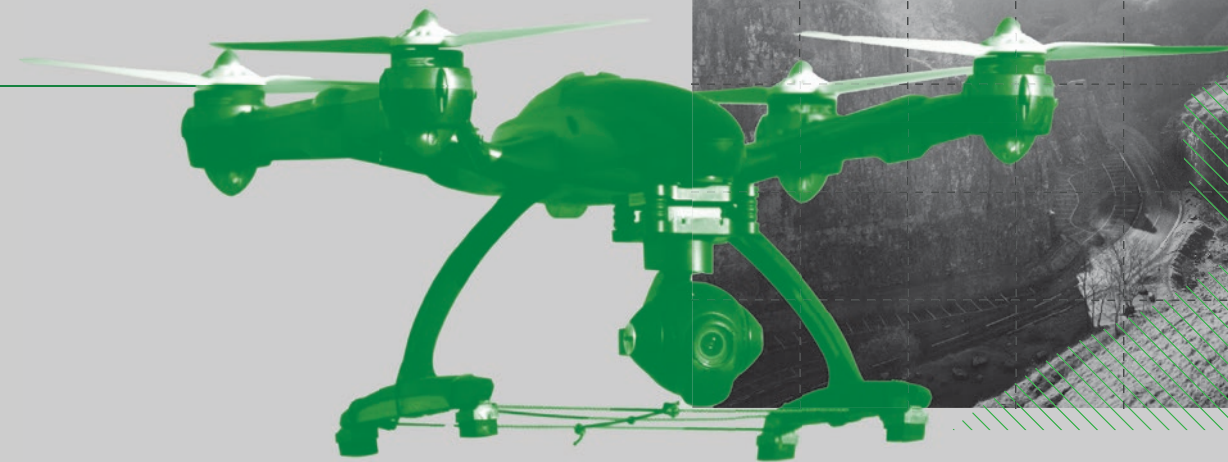
Our focus so far has been collaborating with RICS staff to understand key plans and activities and support the organisation with useful insight and member feedback. The panel has engaged with RICS on a number of issues and initiatives, including:

- prudent value and what this will mean for the valuation profession
- how the way banking regulations require environmental, social and governance disclosures at a corporate level can contradict the purpose of valuation instructions
- risks in real-estate valuations for commercial lending
- how energy performance certificates and Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards affect valuations
- data and AI, the way we access information, how valuers compile their reports, the expectation for contextual data and how members of the public or lenders will instruct valuers
- how automated valuation models will affect the level of work to be done by valuers
- the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 and how this will affect ground rents as investment
- updates to *RICS Valuation - Global Standards* (Red Book Global Standards) as well as other standards
- the RICS valuation conference.

Drones successfully support mountain search and rescue

Search and rescue operations in mountainous areas can be painstaking work for volunteers – but developments in drone technology are helping UK organisations expedite recoveries

WORDS BY BRENDAN O'NEILL



VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS SUCH as Mountain Rescue carry out much search and rescue work in the UK. But as they are staffed by volunteers and receive little or no government money, their budgets are often tight and determined by how much fundraising a team can carry out.



Brendan prepares the DJI M30T drone for take-off at the training site on the edge of the Peak District

Developing programmes to support new technologies and operating procedures needs time as well, and depends on team members taking on additional duties over and above their volunteering commitments. A further complication is that, until recently, the drones available to such organisations were primarily consumer-level technology. Devices were limited by the quality of the sensors and a lack of poor-weather capability.

However, recent advances in the technology and the ever-decreasing price of equipment now mean that all-weather aircraft with high-resolution thermal sensors and high-powered zoom cameras are potentially within the reach of volunteer teams.

These nevertheless remain a significant expenditure, and when an organisation commits to setting up a drone team it needs to consider training time and costs, insurance and ongoing maintenance. All voluntary search and rescue teams operating in the UK must also comply with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulations governing the use of drones.

Most Mountain Rescue England & Wales (MREW) teams who operate drones have therefore elected to train their pilots to complete the

general visual line of sight certificate level. They then obtain an operational authorisation from the CAA and are afforded some privileges that are not available to recreational pilots.

The primary privilege is exemption from the requirement for separation from uninvolved persons, who usually have to be 50m distance horizontally away from operations. With this privilege, however, comes additional responsibility in terms of pilot training, risk assessments, equipment maintenance and being subject to CAA audits.

Drones help to automate mapping

When a pilot is required to search an area, a drone deployment is assessed according to the particular circumstances.

The time of day, environmental conditions, terrain to be searched and the presence of the public all need to be considered. A risk assessment is carried out as part of CAA compliance, and documented for each flight before taking off. Other air users also need to be notified of the operation.

One avenue that MREW teams are pursuing is combining manual operations and autonomous flight paths. Many surveyors will be familiar with

this technique, having used drones that fly autonomous grid patterns to generate mapping data. This approach has been further developed in-house by MREW, based on detailed elevation data provided by Ordnance Survey.

Some years ago MREW volunteers developed MRMap (mrrmap.org.uk), a tool to display detailed maps of a given search area either on site or back at base. These are then split into manageable sections for teams working on foot, who may be accompanied by dogs. The latest iteration of the tool allows a search area to be allocated to a drone.

A detailed flight path is then determined at a user-defined height, which closely follows even complex terrain. Multiple high-resolution images are taken, with the camera angle being adjusted from one point to the next to remain perpendicular to the underlying terrain. The overlap between images ensures each point in the search area is photographed between six and nine times.

After the drone returns, the images are loaded on to a laptop and analysed, on site, to identify colour anomalies: a missing person, or their kit, will be a different colour to the surrounding environment and the software will pick this up as an area that should be physically searched.

As the software indicates exactly where each image was taken, the height, shape of the terrain, camera angle and image resolution, it can determine the exact size and position – to within 1m – of each anomaly. Each item of interest is then relayed to the operator for further investigation. Using this approach, a 500m-by-500m square grid can be searched in around 15 to 20 minutes.

MRMap integrates with ground teams

This MRMap approach was deployed successfully in Glencoe, Scotland in late 2023. A walker had been reported missing, and a large search involving multiple agencies had been carried out over ten days. Although the walker's backpack was found a few days in to the operation, there was no other sign of him.

A number of weeks after this initial search, a team from the Lake District Mountain Rescue Association were deployed to the area. After consulting with the local teams involved in the original operation, they put together a comprehensive drone search plan of 20 areas.

The terrain was unforgiving and consisted of steep, exposed mountain sides and crags. Following the first flight, the software identified

One avenue that Mountain Rescue teams are pursuing is combining manual operations and autonomous flight paths

an anomaly. It wasn't apparent from the image what this was, so a second drone was deployed to the exact coordinates indicated. Sadly, it turned out to be the body of the missing walker. Ground teams were directed to recover his remains, helping bring closure for the man's family.

Another recent search involved a manually controlled flight searching for a missing dog. Figgy the spaniel had run off the edge of a 120m-high cliff in the Peak District. Her owner called the emergency services after injuring herself trying to find the dog. Derby Mountain Rescue team spent a number of hours using rope systems to search the near-vertical cliff face.

The drone was then requested and ten minutes into the flight, a thermal signature was detected just outside the search area. The daylight zoom camera didn't initially show anything so the aircraft was repositioned to get a better view.

Figgy was found with minimal injuries, wedged behind a tree, having fallen more than 60m. The rope system was redeployed and a team member was sent down to recover her. Being a bit excited, the dog was secured inside a large rucksack to be taken back to ground level for an emotional reunion with her owner.

As the technology and software develops, it is likely that the crossover between geospatial surveying and search and rescue requirements can be further leveraged to help in the search for missing people.

Brendan O'Neill is national drone officer for MREW and operational drone lead for Derby Mountain Rescue Team in the Peak District and surrounding areas. Contact him to learn more about MREW and the work of your local teams droneofficer@mountain.rescue.org.uk

Related competencies include: GIS (geographical information systems), Remote sensing and photogrammetry, Surveying and mapping

MapAction looks to data to shape future crisis response

Realising the value of geospatial data, MapAction's new chief executive is redirecting its focus from humanitarian efforts on the ground to advising local agencies on preparedness and risk

WORDS BY COLIN ROGERS

Land Journal: How did your career lead you to become chief executive of MapAction?

Colin Rogers: When I finished my master's in applied parasitology and medical entomology at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) was working on a parasitic disease outbreak in what is now South Sudan. I got a job that involved some field experience in 1995.

The work involved going out with a global positioning system (GPS) and plotting vegetation, identifying forests where the transmission of this disease was known to take place. This enabled MSF to work out where to locate treatment centres.

I started in the front line of a civil war in Sudan and carried on doing deployments in such situations for around 16 years, leading the response to humanitarian crises for various agencies. I was moved to see the level of humanitarian need, how children and their families were suffering through no fault of their own. I wanted to use my skills in parasitic

disease diagnosis to reduce the suffering and ensure people got the treatment they needed.

After that I moved back to headquarters roles where I was in charge of different organisations' global humanitarian operations, advising national offices how to respond to future hazards as well as working on quality standards for humanitarian agencies. These provide a common benchmark for all agencies when planning, for example, how much water a person requires per day, informing operational decisions.

Then the position at MapAction came up. Since joining in October 2023, I have been struck by the power of data in the humanitarian sector at a time when the number of people who need help, whether they are currently affected or at risk of a future crisis, is at an all-time high (see Figure 1).

According to the UN, the funding requirements just to keep people alive for this year are huge, at \$48.7bn (<https://bit.ly/UNHumovw24>). We're seeing increasing impacts from disasters on large population groups owing to climate change, with the associated political instability and displacement of people.

LJ: What do you think are the capabilities that data allows?

CR: Having had a lot of experience on the ground, I had never fully recognised how much more could be done with data. For instance, reliable data can reduce the stress on operational staff when you are under pressure to make difficult decisions in the middle of a rapid onset disaster, such as the Asian tsunami in 2004.

At MapAction, we are a technical agency working with senior managers in operational agencies who are making life-or-death decisions: we support them by providing the data they need. We work to open people's eyes to data and geospatial specialisms, showing generalists that they don't need to be analysts themselves because we can help them understand their data to inform better decisions.

Reliable data can reduce the stress on operational staff when under pressure to make difficult decisions

At the start of an operation or a crisis response, that data might be quite limited and incomplete. The quality could be problematic and there may be discrepancies, but we can help with various phases through consultation: once data is sourced and processed, it needs to be calibrated because different values have different ranges and units, such as number of casualties, corruption index, immunisation rate or density of health facilities.

To aggregate these on a single index they must be normalised – for instance dividing them all by the maximum for a country or region – and then expressed in a common format as a value between 0 and 10. Finally, the data is reviewed and validated, with indicators verified and, where necessary, corrected.

As an emergency response progresses and more reliable data comes through, an organisation should be able to feel more confident in its decision-making process. We want to ensure life-saving assistance reaches those most in need, saving lives, while at the same time enabling organisations to communicate communities' needs to donors and secure the funding to target help more effectively. Good, early information management in a crisis can help do all of that.

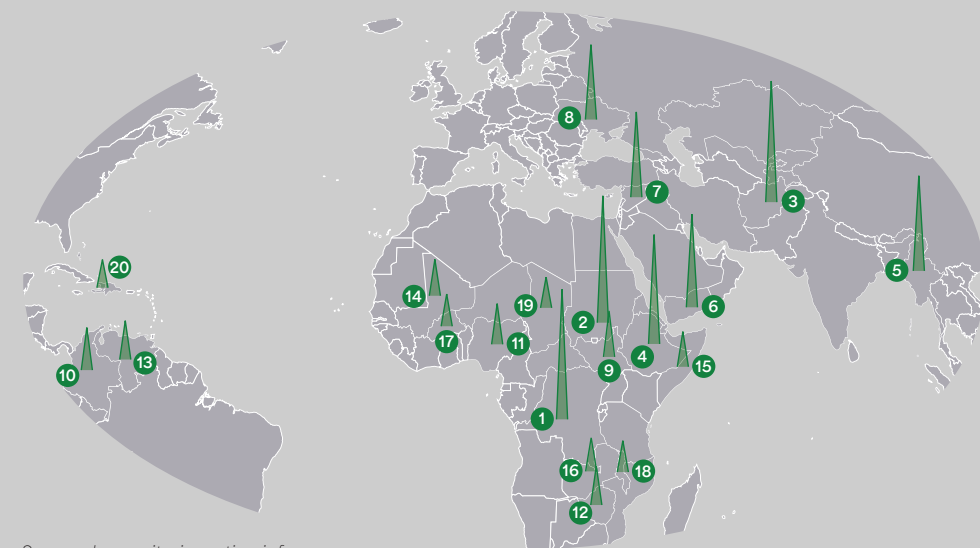
With the right data, disaster authorities can get funds early by triggering anticipatory action and implementing mitigation measures. For example, when a river level gets to a certain point a warning is put out so people have time to evacuate, move school supplies to higher shelves, get to emergency shelters or elsewhere to reach safety. They can move their cattle away.

Given enough warning people can save their businesses, belongings and lives. Although we can never reduce the risk to zero, risk modelling and looking at predictive analytics can minimise the effects of a crisis.

We've done a lot of work around emergency response. In the past 20 years, our staff and volunteers have responded to more than 140 emergencies worldwide, including more than 70 at the request of UN agencies. We've supported decision-makers in more than 30 responses to major floods and another dozen major earthquake responses.

Now we can take our skill sets and apply them more broadly across humanitarian work, looking at preparedness, early warning and anticipatory action. One thing we are focusing on is predicting future shocks and working out how best to mitigate their potential effects.

Figure 1: 20 countries with the most people in need of humanitarian aid, 2023 estimate



Source: humanitarianaction.info

Notes: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the UN. Ranking of countries excludes regional response plans; please see humanitarianaction.info for a full list

1	DR Congo	25,397,896
2	Sudan	24,786,370
3	Afghanistan	23,666,389
4	Ethiopia	21,360,484
5	Myanmar	18,590,021
6	Yemen	18,182,658
7	Syrian Arab Republic	16,661,471
8	Ukraine	14,622,301
9	South Sudan	8,996,986
10	Colombia	8,307,129
11	Nigeria	7,945,364
12	Zimbabwe	7,611,301
13	Venezuela	7,581,480
14	Mali	7,107,194
15	Somalia	6,869,716
16	Zambia	6,552,028
17	Burkina Faso	6,293,939
18	Malawi	6,124,766
19	Chad	6,009,715
20	Haiti	5,500,000

We are looking at risk modelling and identifying risks locally, which until now has been mainly done at a national level. If a national government or local civil society organisation for instance is aware that a crisis could put certain communities and livelihoods at risk, it needs data to support investment in preventing it happening. So we work with many organisations to help them prepare for future disasters by building such models.

LJ: What about artificial intelligence (AI)? Is that important in the sector?

CR: AI is a buzzword, certainly, but I would like to get the basics of data sorted first. More granular data for emergency responses that accounts for sex, age or disabilities can help local organisations make more nuanced decisions. We are particularly keen to bring women to the forefront of our work.

MapAction recently published an advocacy piece (<https://bit.ly/Mapgap>) calling for more such data to be made available to humanitarian organisations during emergency responses, and AI may be able to help in the process of disaggregating original data.

LJ: How are things changing at MapAction?

CR: Our role is increasingly not to be on the ground ourselves but to be the trusted

partner, to ensure data is used to give people early warnings so they can respond appropriately. We're also working with national and regional disaster management authorities so they remain responsible for decision-making.

We need to recognise that the sector can tap into the technical capability of geospatial visual specialists and data scientists around the world more effectively, so the products we develop work in the languages of affected countries instead of all being in English.

Humanitarian, UN or disaster management agency partners know that when a MapAction volunteer is supporting them – whether in an emergency response, a training programme or professional development scheme – they are getting people at the top of their game. MapAction volunteers include 11 people who work for government agencies and nearly a dozen academics, as well as tech and humanitarian leaders in the private sector.

At the same time as tapping into global expertise, we're no longer flying people around the world as much as we used to, both because of increasing climate consciousness and the shift towards using more local expertise.

If our volunteers speak the language – they speak more than a dozen between them – and if they understand the context and can work with local counterparts, and if we can ensure a



Volunteers completing 2023 Operation Readiness course before taking part in any emergency response

speedy response, we'll get involved. But deployment has to fit our strategy of increasingly supporting locally led responses.

During the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl in July 2024, we had volunteers in the Caribbean who could deploy immediately and support emergency assessments and coordination, though we also deployed people from Europe. So we had five volunteers on the ground doing all the mapping for three countries, working with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Authority to strengthen its leadership coordination.

We've got to support the first responders so they can lead and make decisions. We ▶



The MapAction team after training with a national disaster management agency in the Caribbean, 2023

should only ever be coming in to provide an additional resource, giving national disaster management authorities the information they need to allocate resources and set priorities.

We saw this in Belize in May last year, when there were wildfires. We had two volunteers working with the National Emergency Management Organization, providing the tools and listening to what data products and maps were needed. The director of the national disaster management authority used our maps and analysis to brief the prime minister, senior politicians and civil servants. It would have been great if we'd had a volunteer from Belize who could have done that, but we were at least able to mobilise technical, skilled resources giving the authority what it was asking for.

Our service has to be of the highest quality because it enables directors of national disaster management authorities to take the necessary decisions to safeguard well-being in an emergency. Working with new partner organisations means we can embed new approaches, carry out peer-to-peer professional development and share our skills. We can also link local organisations with their counterparts elsewhere in the world. Regions can learn from each other's experiences of such issues.

LJ: What skills do people working in the humanitarian sector need?

CR: You need to be a technical person, but soft skills are also important. In this context,

You don't want to be seen as the specialist coming in, but an extra resource for those who have asked you there

these are actually quite hard skills, such as diplomacy and communication.

If you're working with colleagues and English is their third or fourth language, you must be mindful of that. When I'm recruiting I often look for people who have French and Spanish; but if they have Bahasa (Indonesian), Thai, Haitian Creole or Kiswahili for instance, that means we can work with many more people. Then there's cultural sensitivity. It's very easy for someone to come in and upset people by wearing shorts to the office or even by the way they eat, for instance.

You don't want to be seen as the specialist coming in, but as an extra resource for those who have asked you there to share your skills.

LJ: What are the day-to-day challenges in the job?

CR: Because people know us as an emergency response organisation, changing our direction to apply our skills across work from anticipatory action and preparedness to post-disaster

recovery, and not just emergency disaster response, has to be managed. We want to be seen as globally diverse data and geospatial specialists. That concerns the way donors perceive us too: to secure funding for new areas that we're moving into, we need to network.

I recently went to the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, for instance, where I met stakeholders, talked about where we're going and asked what they would like to see us do. We have to ensure we have the right staff and capabilities. As a global organisation, how can we hire people outside the UK and the EU so we can have a geospatial specialist in Indonesia or a data scientist in Colombia, for instance?

The operations side is another challenge – we need to think through the intricacies of labour law, and work out how, without having a legal presence in a given country, we could contract employees there. Are there any multinational companies with experience in international contracting that could provide some pro bono support and advice?

We want to be open to partnership opportunities that may arise so we can tap into professional help. For instance, a staff health department could provide pre-deployment support and advice for our volunteers, or an HR team could do a confidential debrief where people can discuss what they have experienced on a deployment, or just have a safe space to talk about working in a disaster zone.

LJ: How could Land Journal readers support your work?

CR: Climate change means the number and severity of disasters is on the rise. As we're a small agency, this increases the demands on us to help countries prepare for and respond to crises. But we don't currently have the funds for this, or big reserves to draw on.

Please get in touch with MapAction's head of philanthropic partnerships Zohab Musa (zmusa@mapaction.org) if you or your company can support us to use mapping and spatial analysis to help people in crises.

Colin Rogers is chief executive of MapAction crogers@mapaction.org

Related competencies include: Data management, GIS (geographical information systems), Legal/regulatory compliance, Surveying and mapping

How is the market for BNG units shaping up?

Almost a year since legislation mandating the provision of biodiversity net gain took effect, a recent report compares unit prices in England and identifies other factors effecting this emerging market

WORDS BY IAN HAMBLETON

THE MARKET FOR providing biodiversity net gain (BNG) units as part of development is still quite new, with legislation requiring 10% BNG under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 – only coming into effect last year. This presents landowners and farmers with an opportunity to use land to sell BNG units. However, there are new processes and workflows to understand if you want to do so.

In October, Biodiversity Units UK published its latest quarterly pricings and insights report (<https://bit.ly/BNGrepOct24>), which aggregates data from BNG suppliers across the country. Understanding these prices is crucial as it can help determine potential revenue.

Our report shows BNG prices vary according to the region and habitat type. For instance, in the south of England, more common habitats such as other neutral grassland cost £27,200 per unit, while they are slightly cheaper in the north at £26,700. Non-priority lakes and ponds are priced at £65,625 in the south and £60,375 in the north. These differences indicate how local factors affect pricing and the availability of certain units.

Another factor that complicates matters is that we have found local planning authorities are still adjusting to the new biodiversity requirement, even though it has been in force for some time. Developers are therefore advised to over-prepare their applications to avoid delays and potential challenges.

Many BNG providers' sites are under development but don't yet have the necessary section 106 agreements, further complicating compliance. Only 19 sites are providing BNG at the time of writing, according to the register kept by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (<https://bit.ly/BNG9mo>), so there is a risk that developers might be caught off guard when they need units quickly before construction can begin.

However, the market has significantly warmed up in recent months, with most developers now aware of the need to factor in BNG. Indeed, a number are engaging in their first BNG deals, and a few are already processing their second or third.

Stay informed and flexible to benefit

BNG prices could also be affected by the property market: a potential building boom prompted by new government policies or lower interest rates could increase demand for BNG units, driving prices up. Conversely, an influx of new providers could boost supply and thus bring prices down.

Our report also highlights a significant increase in BNG-related surveys and contracts, with a 250% month-on-month rise in deal transactions. This surge underscores the growing importance of BNG paperwork, including surveys and reports, and the complexities of integrating these requirements into development projects.

The BNG market is new but rapidly expanding. Landowners, land managers and farmers can capitalise on this growth by keeping informed and adaptable. With ongoing education and more standardised local planning authority requirements, navigating the market should become easier in the coming months.

Biodiversity Units UK will continue to publish further reports on a quarterly basis to track changes in BNG prices.

For more must-read articles, visit www3.rics.org/land-journal

Ian Hambleton is director at Biodiversity Units UK ian@biodiversity-units.uk

Related competencies include: Land use and diversification, Management of the natural environment and landscape, Sustainability, Valuation



For further key sector insights, visit ww3.rics.org/land-journal

Land and natural resources standards and guidance

Recently published

Surveyors advising in respect of compulsory purchase and statutory compensation professional standard, 2nd edition, UK

RICS has updated this standard to ensure it remains fit for purpose in a complex and evolving sector.

The development of large infrastructure projects such as the HS2 rail link has placed compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) at the forefront of national discussions. Because the exercise of CPO powers can have a significant impact on homes, livelihoods and businesses, it is essential for surveyors to adhere to strict professional requirements.

The standard sets out 21 mandatory professional behaviour and competence expectations of RICS members working in this field, ensuring best practice is upheld consistently across the UK.

Impact of carbon markets on the rural economy practice information, 1st edition, UK

This document explores the emergence of carbon markets and their potential for income diversification, particularly through soil carbon sequestration projects. It examines how such projects, aligned with the UK's transition from the EU Common Agricultural Policy to Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMSs), offer new financial opportunities for landowners while supporting environmental goals.

The practice information also addresses the challenges of incorporating carbon credits into property valuations, emphasising the need for collaboration across sectors such as finance, insurance and law to integrate carbon markets into the wider property sector.

In addition, the document explores the market price of carbon offset credits, distinct from the social cost of carbon. Specifically, it looks at recognising the value of such credits in UK land valuations for loan security, aiming to inform valuers about incorporating

these credits into their assessments. The potential benefits include financial rewards for land improvement, letting banks lend based on carbon credits, and helping mitigate global climate change.

To read these, please visit rics.org/standards

Forthcoming publications

Land agreements for development purposes professional standard, 1st edition, UK

This standard aims to ensure surveyors provide the best and most up-to-date advice for clients on the agreement types available to the landowner, purchaser or promoter in this complex area of practice.

Affordable housing developments - valuation considerations professional standard, 1st edition, UK

This standard aims to help practitioners in the valuation of land for affordable housing development. This area of practice is highly regulated, and subject to changes in government policy as well as support programmes through housing associations and others.

International land performance framework practice information, 1st edition, global

This document focuses on holistic performance measurement, building on the International Land Measurement Standard framework and the International Building Operation Standard.

Also in development

- *Party wall legislation and procedure professional standard*, 8th edition, England and Wales
- *Drones: applications and compliance for surveyors practice information*, 2nd edition, UK & Ireland
- *Valuing biodiversity in urban areas professional standard*, 1st edition

PGP chair's message

Members' vital role in sustainability emphasised to draw next generation



PANEL CHAIR DAVID SANDBROOK FRICS

It is a privilege to chair the land and natural resources professional group panel (PGP), which is made up of members and staff from across the built and natural environments, including the established rural, geomatics, planning and development, minerals and waste, and environment professional groups, as well as the market areas of infrastructure and compulsory purchase, telecommunications, water and energy.

Subjects such as land use, water quality, renewable energy, the responsible use of natural resources and the reuse of construction materials are critically important to the circular economy and the journey to net-zero carbon, with RICS members being essential in achieving sustainability. Similarly, mapping, measurement and accurate boundaries are the foundations for all land use and development.

The PGP is focusing on raising the profile of RICS member involvement in its constituent sectors to attract a diverse talent pipeline, highlight the relevance of RICS qualifications and support entry into the profession.

The panel gathers market insight and helps with the development of RICS standards, guidance material and market briefings. It seeks to ensure members are receiving relevant CPD by promoting popular face-to-face conferences, plus webinars and podcasts, to provide global reach.

Working with a wider number of members through specialist advisory groups, the panel has also contributed to RICS' responses to UK government consultations on planning, land use and housing construction. Given

Subjects such as land use, water quality, renewable energy, the responsible use of natural resources and the reuse of construction materials are critically important to the circular economy

its public interest remit, it is also engaged in topics such as natural capital accounting, biodiversity net gain, carbon sequestration and critical minerals.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Podcast discusses key land issues

A recent podcast features RICS head of land and natural resources James Kavanagh and members of the land and resources professional group panel (PGP) discussing its work, and sharing insights on compulsory purchase, telecommunications, biodiversity net gain and digital connectivity.

We have also produced an episode introducing the PGP, featuring David Sandbrook and two panel members.

To listen, please visit rics.org/podcast

RICS has input on planning reform

In September, RICS submitted a 72-page response to the new UK government's proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework, engaging with experts and government and holding a round table with the planning minister.

Join us at 2025 GeoBusiness show

RICS is a proud partner of this annual event taking place in ExCeL London in June. Find out more and register for your free ticket at

geobusinessshow.com

PRACTICE ESSENTIALS

Upcoming conferences

UK & Ireland minerals and waste conference, April 2025

UK & Ireland rural conference, June 2025

Dates are provisional, please check rics.org/conferences for updates.



Data centre growth seen in range of scheme sizes and retrofits

As demand for computing power rises, developers are turning to options from hyper-scale data centres to smaller urban schemes, as well as retrofitting suitable commercial and industrial space

WORDS BY ROBERT NICHOLSON MRICS

ACCORDING TO A Rider Levitt Bucknall (RLB) report that was published last year (<https://bit.ly/RLBdatacent24>), the data centre sector's energy consumption is considerable – and still growing.

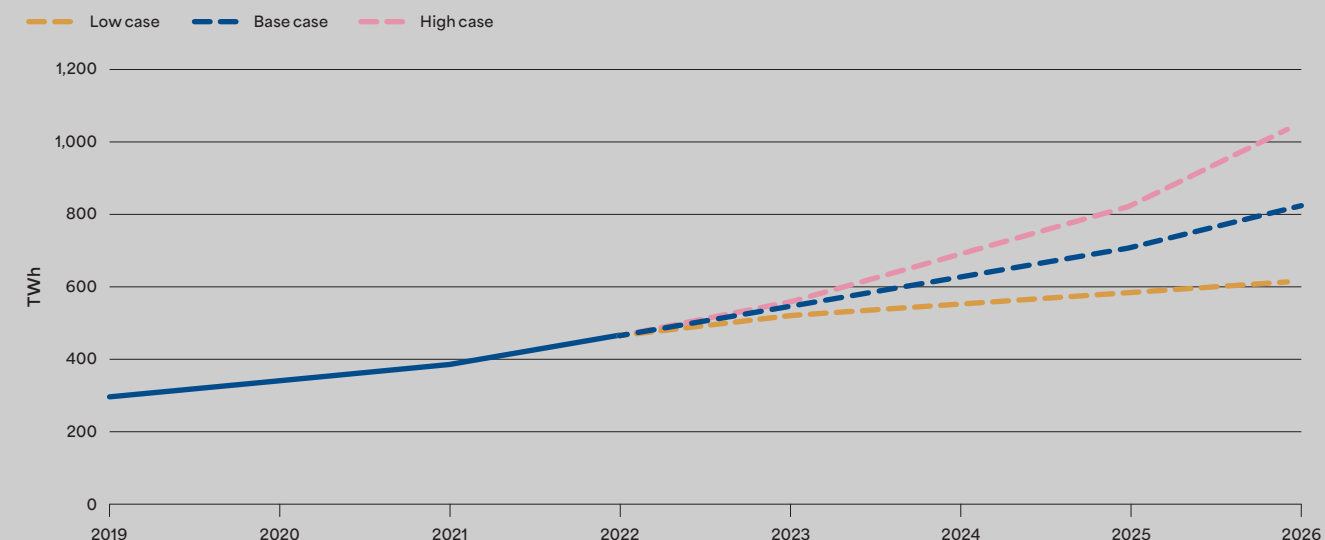
The International Energy Agency (<https://bit.ly/IEAelec24>) found that, in 2022, the world's data centres used 460TWh (see Figure 1), equivalent to powering more than 8m homes. This figure could more than double to 1,000TWh by 2026, roughly equivalent to the annual energy consumption of Japan (see Figure 2). As a result, small, medium and large data centres will need to be developed rapidly to meet demand in coming years.

Power demand defines hyper scale

Most of the headlines about the sector refer to what are termed hyper-scale data centres. While there is no accepted definition of these, such a centre is generally considered to be one that can support in excess of 40MW of computing power or more than 5,000 servers, and which has a minimum of 1,000m² of data hall space.

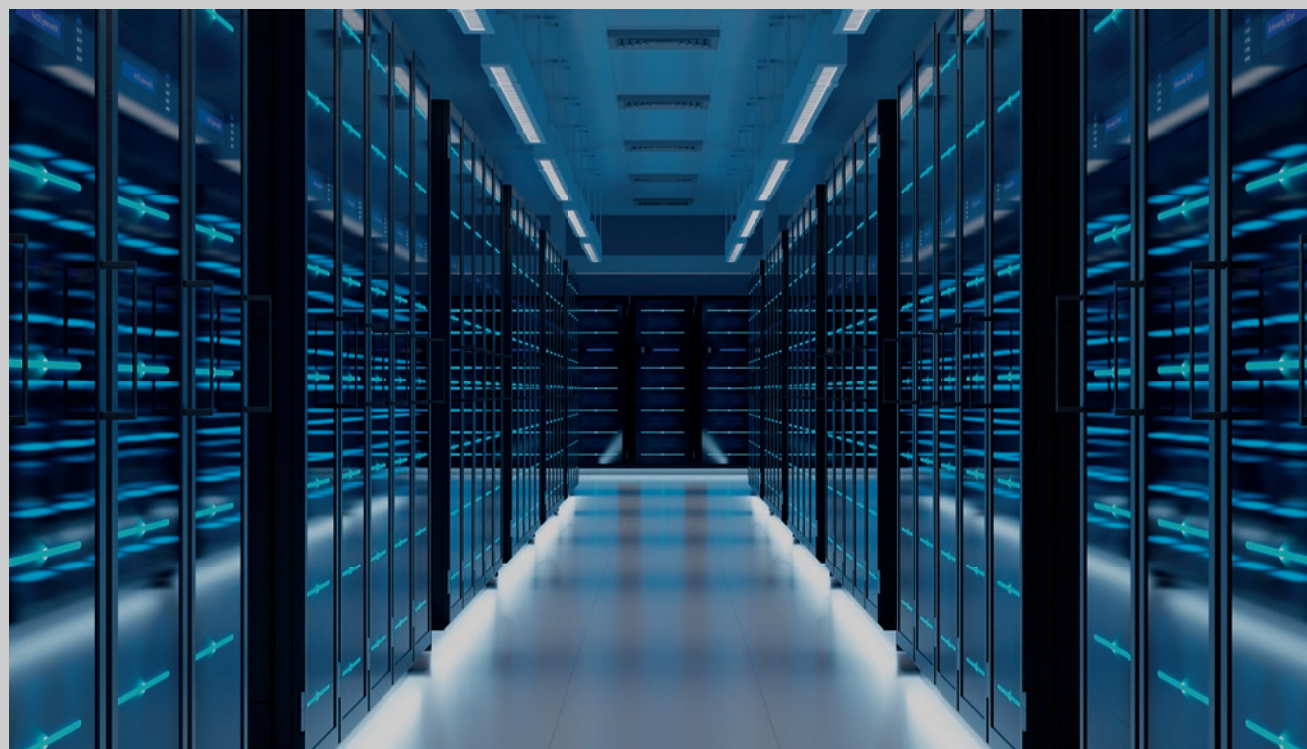
The key metrics are the power and cooling that the servers require. The amount of servers that can be supported varies greatly, given

Figure 1: Global electricity demand from data centres, AI and cryptocurrencies, 2019-26



Source: *Electricity 2024: Analysis and forecast to 2026*, IEA (<https://bit.ly/IEAelec24>)

Notes: Includes traditional data centres, dedicated AI data centres, and cryptocurrency consumption; excludes demand from data transmission networks. The base case scenario has been used in the overall forecast in this report, while low and high case scenarios reflect the uncertainties in the pace of deployment and efficiency gains amid future technological developments



GETTY

that consumption can range from 200kWh to more than 1.5MWh depending on the number of CPUs, cores and fans, the size of RAM and so on.

The floor area is therefore the least reliable metric. A 40MW data centre, for instance, may actually need somewhere between 10,000m² and 12,500m², much more than the 1,000m² minimum. Major cloud computing providers and specialist data centre developers are even building 90MW data centres, comprising three, four or more buildings on a campus.

However, not all data centres are hyper scale, and many successful developers build highly resilient high-power facilities for customers

A 40MW data centre may need between 10,000m² and 12,500m² of floor area, much more than the 1,000m² minimum

that require smaller-scale space to host their IT platforms.

Having worked in the sector for many years, I have found that such centres are designed to the same standards and specifications, or sometimes even higher, than those built directly by hyper-scale cloud providers.

All sizes of facility share requirements

Nevertheless, large and hyper-scale modern data centres often share a number of requirements, as follows.

- The proportion of net data hall space – or white space, as the sector calls it – is generally 40–50% of the gross internal area, excluding any office blocks. This allows room for all the critical mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) infrastructure.
- Power and cooling loads are typically 2,500–4,000W/m² of net data hall space. A mid-sized 30MW centre at 3,500W/m² requires 8,570m² of net white space, and a gross internal area of between 17,140m² and 21,425m².
- Significantly sized dual power supplies ideally need to be close to the data centre; that is, there should be two main

connections to the local grid, sourced from independent substations or connection points, so that if one goes down there is another to ensure the facility's resilience.

- High-speed fibre networks should be accessible, and the more carriers are available the better.
- Noise and emissions of nitrogen oxides, carbon dioxide and diesel particulates from generators and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) plant can be an issue in urban environments, and must be managed effectively.
- IT racks, MEP services and HVAC generally need 8–9m between the structural floor slab and the structural ceiling or soffit.
- Foundations, structural frames and floors must be strong enough to handle loadings of 10–15kN/m²; for comparison, offices might only handle loads of 3–5kN/m².
- Columns must be spaced in such a way as to maximise useable floor area in data halls.
- Roofs may have to bear significant weight from HVAC or heat rejection equipment.
- The physical distance between pieces of equipment must be minimised in order to reduce system losses such as voltage ▶

drops between switchgear and connections to IT racks.

- Significant external space is necessary for HVAC, medium-voltage electricals, standby power generation systems and bulk fuel storage; generally, this will be 30% or more of a data centre's gross internal area.

Industrial conversions offer potential

However, shortages of space and of sites are problems faced by everyone in the construction industry – and data centre development is no different. Developers of small and medium-sized centres are therefore looking to convert existing premises, with industrial warehouses, logistics distribution centres and industrial or manufacturing spaces being among the preferred options.

Logistics centres are particularly well suited to this as they fulfil most of the requirements in terms of size, clear spans, external space and existing hardstandings for MEP plant, as well as having capacity to add internal structural floors to create at least two data hall levels, and

access to major road and transport networks. Manufacturing buildings that have large, open floor spaces with good slab-to-slab heights, load-bearing capacity and external space also make good candidates for conversion to large or hyper-scale use.

From my experience on numerous retrofit projects, including the conversion of a disused chocolate factory into a data centre in Sweden, there are a number of key items to keep in mind on any site:

- level and availability of medium- or high-voltage power in the local networks
- the fact that new power supplies can take two to three years and cost more than £1.5m per kilometre to install
- the location of main fibre nodes for the site and the number of carriers available
- the extensive work likely to be necessary to support installation of HVAC on warehouse roofs, which are generally lightweight, if such equipment can't be sited elsewhere
- proximity of residential areas, or areas subject to noise restrictions.

If the size and structural design of an existing building is too constrained, it is often more cost-effective to demolish it and rebuild a bespoke shell rather than compromise the critical MEP infrastructure design and building efficiency.

Urban edge data centres take strain

There is also an active and increasing market for smaller-scale, so-called edge data centres, intended for deployment in urban areas that do not suit large or hyper-scale buildings.

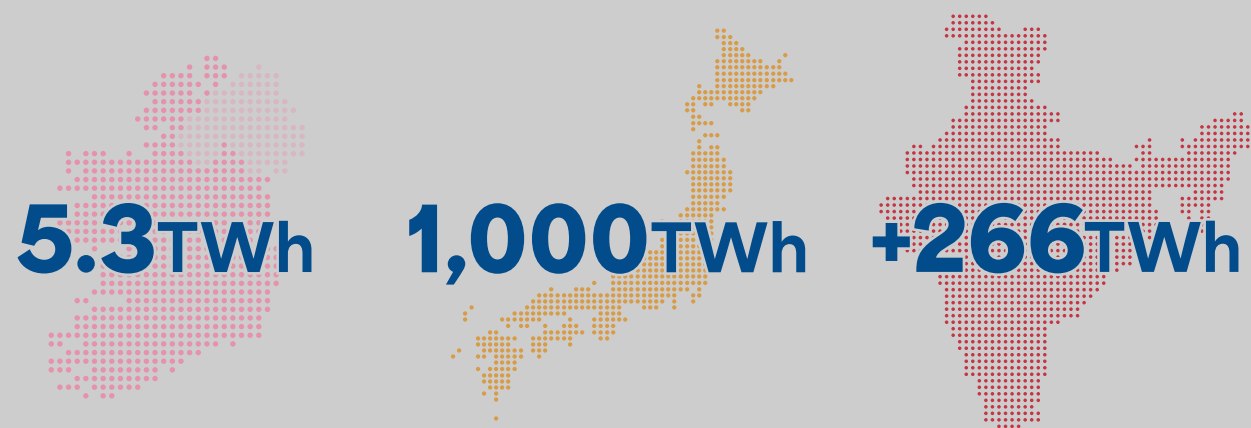
Although they are designed to connect to large or hyper-scale facilities, edge data centres are located closer to end users to improve bandwidth and reduce latency – that is, lag – in digital services provided over the internet, such as 4K video streaming, 5G mobile communication networks or connected vehicle technologies.

Lower latency and higher data throughput are the key factors in minimising processing times and improving customer experiences. Edge centres therefore take some of the strain



Aerial view of Microsoft data centre in Middenmeer, the Netherlands

Figure 2: Data centre demand in context



Electricity demand from data centres in Ireland was 5.3TWh in 2022, representing 17% of the country's total electricity consumed. By 2026, 32% of the country's electricity demand could come from data centres

Data centres consumed an estimated 460TWh globally in 2022. This is expected to increase to more than 1,000TWh by 2026, the equivalent of the electrical consumption of Japan

Over the next three years, India will add electricity demand roughly equivalent to the current consumption of the UK, which was 266TWh in 2023. While renewables are set to meet almost half of this demand growth, one-third is expected to come from increasing coal-fired electricity generation

Source: *Electricity 2024: Analysis and forecast to 2026*, IEA (<https://bit.ly/IEAelec24>), and Statista: Electricity consumption from all electricity suppliers in the UK from 2000 to 2023 (<https://bit.ly/UKelecuse>)

off the larger facilities, make more efficient use of processing resources, and allow for quicker response times.

Such centres range from 250kW to 5MW in computing power, typically feeding 20–100 IT cabinets that each hold around 40 servers. They also lend themselves to modular designs, require less in the way of physical space and standby power and use smaller HVAC systems, all of which can make them easier to deploy in urban environments.

With less intensive power demands, edge data centres can also ease the issues with

Edge centres take some of the strain off the larger facilities, make more efficient use of processing resources, and allow for quicker response times

back-up generator installations, power connections, noise and emissions that are associated with their bigger cousins. This makes them more suitable for installation in other building types; for example, former commercial offices, residences, public buildings and smaller industrial units.

Key items for a potential edge data centre location include the following:

- access to high-speed fibre networks to enable connections to large or hyper-scale data centres
- proximity to mobile communication network nodes
- availability of stable power connections and dual supplies
- single-storey buildings with large floor areas, or multistorey buildings that have large ground floors
- sufficient external space for critical MEP equipment, systems and fuel storage
- ease of making the site physically secure
- permits or planning restrictions on noise and emissions for MEP plant
- proximity to transport networks and hubs for staff.

Understand demand to plan growth

There is no doubt that the demand for data, and therefore the demand for data centres, will continue to increase at pace. In fact, RLB's research showed that data centre operators were expected to commission 65% more capacity in 2024 (<https://bit.ly/RLBdatacent24>).

Understanding how we accommodate data centres is thus key to masterplanning our rural areas, where there is land to build, and our cities, where connectivity is needed. Converting unused buildings is often the most efficient way to integrate edge data centres, while disused warehouse space or new builds may better suit hyper-scale projects. Recognising requirements and aligning these with the locality can help the sector progress.

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Related competencies include:
Design and specification, Smart cities and intelligent buildings



Industry faces up to scale of climate change challenge

With the theme of the 2024 RICS global construction and infrastructure conference being rethinking the industry's future, one panel focused on how construction can mitigate climate change

WORDS BY HEATHER EVANS, BHAVYA KUKRETY, AMIT PATEL MRICS

WHILE CONSTRUCTION GROWTH over the coming decade is likely to benefit from technological developments in the industry, it is going to have to address environmental imperatives as well.

With this in mind, last summer's RICS Global construction and infrastructure conference considered, among other issues, how to build sustainable, efficient and intelligent urban environments. One panel in particular focused on construction's role in adapting to climate change.

Bhavya Kukrety, the managing director of engineering and project management consultancy Meinhardt Singapore, and Heather Evans, partner and global lead of sustainability for Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB), explored strategies for building resilience and how the industry can contribute to climate change mitigation, in a session moderated by RICS head of professional practice for construction Amit Patel MRICS.

Amit Patel: From a consultancy point of view, what has changed over the past five years in terms of sustainability in the construction industry?

Heather Evans: It has been a transformational time. Before COVID-19, sustainability was often seen as a nice-to-have option, but not necessarily central to the construction industry. We've seen a significant transformation since then, not only in terms of what our clients need but also what the regulation and guidance is saying as well.

Our clients around the world, whether public or private, are considering not just what they can do to look good but also what they can do to innovate and make sure that they're creating buildings and infrastructure fit for the future.

AP: Bhavya, I'm interested in how this is affecting infrastructure, particularly the work that you do.

Bhavya Kukrety: Singapore is quite committed to the transition to sustainability, and has been for the past ten to 15 years. But in the infrastructure sector it has been tough for us in all countries – including Singapore, to be perfectly honest – because there are a lot of moving parts, including digitisation of existing infrastructure assets.

As engineers, we are trying to change the way that we think about urban infrastructure. There is still some way to go, though, from considerations such as urban financing to material choice and clients' requirements.

It needs us to move from a mathematical model and instead consider the actual impact of a product or material that we use on the site. A lot more inclusion – in terms of input from a diverse group of professionals – and positive thinking is needed for the next 15–20 years from all industry leaders.

AP: I do think we are in the infancy of this movement; it's just about to take off. What does this shift look like from a client's point of view, Heather?

HE: This differs between sectors and global regions. There is significant variation in terms of the maturity of net-zero policy and climate change adaptation, as well as the availability of green finance.

We've seen a huge effort across the UK and Europe, particularly in the private sector. That is predominantly down to reporting regulations, but it is also a result of the availability of green finance. Being able to draw on such funding or enjoy a preferential rate of lending has made the private sector sit up and think how it can demonstrate that it is doing well, but also change its practices so organisations are sustainable and have future-fit assets.

From a compliance perspective, there's far more regulation than there ever has been in the past; however, voluntary reporting has also increased as a result of stakeholder and societal demand. Businesses want to know that their projects are going to be sustainable, not just from the perspective of climate but also for our people and communities.

Businesses want to know that their projects are going to be sustainable, not just from the climate perspective but also for our people and communities

AP: Have we as professionals got the skills and capacity to ensure this?

HE: This is a question that I'm passionate about: how can we transform our existing skill sets to meet the industry's future needs? As built environment consultants, we have fantastic transferable skills that can enable us to become sustainability advocates.

Right now, though, construction has a skills gap that we need to address by attracting more people into the industry – not just people starting their careers, but those joining from different industries as well, and those looking to return to work.

Construction historically hasn't been the fastest adopter of innovative ideas, so the green skills revolution is a great way for us to demonstrate how forward-thinking we can be.

AP: Bhavya, could you discuss some of the work your company is doing, and the barriers that you face?

BK: As engineers, we intervene in construction projects at a grassroots level. We try to look at the project from the perspective of a contractor, or a resident – what do they know about noise levels, last-mile connectivity, the impact of digital technology and its effect on the industry?

Singapore is way ahead in this regard, and we are trying to promote such practices in the rest of Asia and the Middle East region to make progress. We are trying to be realistic about sustainability on the ground, to cultivate an understanding of how much embodied carbon is present when you use a particular material, and how operational carbon can also be minimised.

To us this is the larger challenge in the infrastructure industry, because I would emphasise that the market still looks to optimise for cost rather than sustainability.

AP: Looking at the supply chain, do you think that it has caught up with market demand for more sustainable construction products?

BK: This is an important question, and my answer is that it has not. When you are looking at the huge demand for glass, steel and sand, very few recycled materials can replace these important construction components.

A lot of research is ongoing, but looking at the scale of mass mixed-use development projects in various regions, its applicability is sometimes challenging. I think recycled material can meet a lot of the demand from, say, an interiors or furnishings perspective or even building-level infrastructure. But when it comes to the massive demand created by kilometres of pipeline, roads or rail networks, the industry has yet to advance to that level.

AP: Heather, from a consultant's point of view, when a client has high aspirations for a net-zero building how are those passed down the supply chain to the contractors, subcontractors and even manufacturers of goods and services?

HE: It's an important aspect to explore, because construction as an industry doesn't have particularly large profit margins, and our risk appetite generally is pretty low.

New and innovative ways of generating energy do require a significant capital expenditure, but the longer-term benefits are there, with differing ways to fund green energy generation too. It goes back to the case for collaboration; this work can't be done in silos.

We have to make sure we are not passing risk along, because the vast majority of the construction and infrastructure supply chain is made up of SMEs that cannot accept it. As an industry, therefore, we need to think about the wider benefit and consider how we can transform ourselves for the future.

For more must-read articles, visit ww3.rics.org/construction-journal

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Construction standards and guidance

Forthcoming publication

Global construction standards

These standards aim to serve as a comprehensive body of knowledge for quantity surveyors, and will comprise two main components:

- global principles of quantity surveying practice
- guidance material for quantity surveyors, and about the essential functions of a quantity surveying professional.

RICS recently conducted a member survey to gather feedback on existing quantity surveying standards and identify priorities for the new project, collecting valuable insights. These are informing the content and structure of the standards, and working groups have been established for various chapters.

The standards will also be supported by related practice information.

For further key sector insights, visit ww3.rics.org/construction-journal

PRACTICE ESSENTIALS

Certificate in BIM - online course

The rise of building information modelling (BIM) and other digital technology has revolutionised construction, meaning that project managers now play a vital role in advocating the benefits of BIM to clients and stakeholders, guiding strategic application of the technology and demonstrating expertise in executing projects.

This online course will help BIM managers to understand information needs throughout the project life cycle, establish effective information management processes, and foster collaborative environments to make best use of BIM.

Certificate in construction project management - online course

Throughout this course, you'll explore each project stage, including planning, organising and controlling construction operations, as well as managing feasibility studies, design, construction, maintenance and refurbishment, as well as demolition.

The content provides a rounded view of construction project management and essential skills.

To find out more about these and other courses, please visit rics.org/training-events

Upcoming conferences

Global Construction and Infrastructure Conference, June 2025

To find out more about this and other events, please visit rics.org/conferences

Note, date is provisional. Please check online for further details.

PGP chair's message

Diverse range of professionals focus on future of industry



PANEL CHAIR ROGER ESSON MRICS

The construction professional group panel (PGP) has been running for just over a year now, and there is a fair amount of work going on. Quantity surveyors and other construction professionals make up some 20% of the total RICS membership globally, and consequently we have the most diverse range of surveying professionals covering activity in the widest sense of the built environment.

We have members who are quantity surveyors for contractors, and others who work in infrastructure programme and project management, private practice and academia. We also have specialists in adjudication and expert witness as well as in digital, data and AI and in the engineering construction sector. The PGP also has international representation.

Among its current work, the panel is contributing to the development of the *Global construction standards* (see left), reviewing the content and mapping out the revised structure to make it appropriate into the future. Talking of the future, we're supporting early engagement with schoolchildren as well, using Minecraft, and we look forward to seeing the results of their sustainability project.

Indeed, sustainability is becoming the cornerstone of built environment strategy. The panel therefore recognises the necessity of integrating such concerns into every phase of a project, and we've been active in the implementation of RICS' *Whole life carbon assessment for the built environment* professional standard, second edition.

Speaking for myself, it was a pleasure to chair the UK quantity surveying and

The PGP recognises that sustainability is becoming the cornerstone of built environment strategy

construction conference in October, and fantastic to have RICS president Tina Paillet as keynote speaker. The conference discussed topics as diverse as the 2024 update to JCT, the effects of AI and digital technology, skills shortages, and mental health.

The key thing that I learned was that we as a profession have a lot of opportunities, and that we will play a significant role in achieving net-zero-carbon targets globally. The PGP's activities need to address these challenges.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Workshop focuses on corruption

A well-attended workshop in September looked at how to tackle corruption in the construction industry, addressing a number of potential dilemmas that may arise on a project and how they could be dealt with.

WLCA standard takes effect

The *Whole life carbon assessment for the built environment* (WLCA) professional standard, second edition, continues to receive an excellent response since becoming effective last July, and is being adopted by industry and the profession around the world.

The first cohort of those taking the certificate in whole-life carbon assessment have just completed the course, with the second cohort due to start the training programme shortly. Find out more about this and other courses at rics.org/training-events



Tribunals

Covering May 2024 - October 2024

For full details of all the published regulatory decisions, see [rics.org/regulatoryoutcomes](https://www.rics.org/regulatoryoutcomes)

Member name and number	Date	Type of hearing	Details	Outcome
Kevin Day [0850383]	01.05.24	Registration Panel Hearing	Application for readmission to membership	Granted
Matthew Ainger [0851836]	02.05.24	Disciplinary Panel Hearing	Failure to comply with CPD requirements	Reprimand and fine
Edward Webb [5604706]	04.06.24	Appeal Panel Hearing	Appeal of Disciplinary Panel decision dated January 2024	Dismissed
Malcolm White [0061119]	18.06.24	Disciplinary Panel Hearing	Failure to comply with CPD requirements	Expulsion
Mark Williamson [1126211]	25.06.24	Disciplinary Panel Hearing	Failure to comply with Rule 1 of the Rules of Conduct 2021	Not proved
Gewan M Bharatlall [0824842]	29.06.24	Single Member Decision	Failure to comply with CPD requirements	Expulsion
Emma Walker [6600739]	09.07.24	Appeal Panel Hearing	Appeal of Disciplinary Panel decision dated February 2024	Dismissed
Kevin Hudson [0084426]	16.07.24	Disciplinary Panel Hearing	Failure to comply with CPD requirements	Expulsion
Jean-Charles Feliu [1296387]	30.08.24	Single Member Decision	Failure to comply with CPD requirements	Expulsion
Rizwan Kalideen [6803918]	27.08.24	Disciplinary Panel Hearing	Failure to comply with Rule 1 of the RICS Rules of Conduct 2021	Expulsion
Timothy Lunt [0079912]	24.09.24	Single Member Decision	Failure to comply with CPD requirements	Expulsion

The Regulatory Tribunal determines regulatory and disciplinary cases against RICS Members, which includes the most serious matters referred to the Disciplinary Panel (or Single Members) following a detailed investigation. The Registration Panel reviews registration decisions and determines re-admission applications, and the Appeal Panel considers appeals against Disciplinary and Registration Panel decisions.

The Tribunal is formed of independent (non-RICS) and RICS members and is led by an independent Presiding Chair. The Tribunal is held at 'arm's length' and is overseen by the Standards and Regulation Board. For more information about Tribunal and the full decisions, please see the [rics.org](https://www.rics.org) website.

Member services

RICS membership brings industry recognition and enhanced professional opportunities. It also gives you access to a wide range of services and benefits, offering support throughout your career

Matrics: supporting your early career

RICS Matrics is our early career community designed to support students, apprentices, trainees and those who are newly qualified (up to 10 years) as they move into the industry. It gives the community a platform to influence the profession, as well as an opportunity to network and gain support as members go through the assessment.

The Matrics network, made up of 26 local committees across the UK, offers peer support groups, mentoring, free online Continuous Personal Development (CPD) opportunities, networking and social events, all designed to develop the leaders of tomorrow.

For more information or to get involved: [rics.org/networking/matrics](https://www.rics.org/networking/matrics)

CPD Support

The CPD Support Pack is an online training resource, which gives you access to the content you need to remain compliant with all the key standards and guidance.

Available to RICS members and APC candidates, this free pack offers essential, bite-sized, local content, with opportunities for global and local networking plus extra resources for supporting you throughout your career. [rics.org/training-events/rics-support-packages/rics-member-cpd-support-pack](https://www.rics.org/training-events/rics-support-packages/rics-member-cpd-support-pack)

Dispute Resolution Service

The RICS Dispute Resolution Service (DRS) provides impartial, professional solutions for resolving disputes in the built environment. These services are known as alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods, which help parties

Benefits Plus

Our rewards programme, Benefits Plus, provides members and candidates with a wide range of discounts, services and partner events.

The rewards partners are all chosen based on in-depth research and with our surveyors in mind.

Visit [rics.org/about-rics/member-value/benefits-plus](https://www.rics.org/about-rics/member-value/benefits-plus)



Members can work from our Birmingham office

resolve issues efficiently, cost-effectively and without the need for lengthy litigation in court.

With an experienced panel of professionals, RICS DRS ensures fair, timely and confidential resolutions across our range of services. [rics.org/dispute-resolution-service](https://www.rics.org/dispute-resolution-service)

Get involved with the surveying community

At the myRICS community, members will find an online space where they can exchange ideas, share documents and network with fellow professionals working in the built environment.

The platform gives you direct contact with fellow surveying professionals and can help you to solve work issues, raise important technical questions for debate or even just chat about current events.

For information on how to join the community and build your profile, contact the myRICS communities team by emailing myricscommunity@rics.org

Work from our offices

Your RICS membership gives you free access to our modern office spaces in key locations around the UK.

Our recently refurbished London headquarters in the heart of Westminster has a members lounge where you can use video conferencing facilities, reliable wifi and our conference and seminar rooms for meetings with clients and colleagues.

The centrally located Birmingham office has flexible space, private booths and hot-desks as well as more formal boardroom space if needed.

For more information about all our offices: [rics.org/about-rics/where-we-are](https://www.rics.org/about-rics/where-we-are)

SUPPORT WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

LionHeart: no problem faced alone

Surveyors are people, not just professionals doing a job, and they are not immune to any of life's challenges, from ill health and job loss to financial hardship, bereavement or mental health crises.

LionHeart's mission is a commitment that no RICS professional should face a problem alone. With demand for help up by 100% in the past five years, we're more grateful than ever for the support of the surveying community, whose generous donations mean we can keep meeting that demand.

- Find out more about LionHeart's support at [lionheart.org.uk](https://www.lionheart.org.uk)
- Help us support fellow surveyors with a donation through your RICS subs or on the LionHeart website

Member obituaries

Member obituaries are published on the RICS website, you can find them at [rics.org/obituaries](https://www.rics.org/obituaries)

If you are facing hardship after the loss of a family member, or are considering leaving a legacy, please contact LionHeart, the charity for RICS members and their families. There is further information at [lionheart.org.uk](https://www.lionheart.org.uk)

Justin Young welcomes the return of a printed magazine for RICS members

When we set our new strategy, member value was the first of our four strategic priorities. Since then, we've done a lot of work to understand what members need and want.

One thing we've been asked about is bringing back some form of printed magazine. We've listened and here it is!

One of the first products of the Surveyor's Institution, following its foundation in 1868, was a printed journal sent to members. Today, with the ability to publish online, we've been able to take a different approach. This new magazine will showcase the best of our online Modus and Journals, and will also include news, updates from our Professional Group Panels, and advice from RICS and the surveying profession.

This isn't the only way that we're responding to member feedback. In the past year, we've also started work to improve our contact centre, opened an office with member facilities in Cardiff, improved facilities for members at our London HQ, and given world regional boards more control of planning and budgets to make sure members around the world get more of the events they need.

We've also run a series of events to get more views from members and shape our future improvement plans. We'll continue to listen and respond to feedback, and you're welcome to make suggestions about what you'd like to see in this magazine.



“We'll continue to listen and respond to feedback”

JUSTIN YOUNG
CEO, RICS



KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION SERVICES

The RICS library contains books dating back to the 1590s and offers digital access to a wide range of its resources, for members around the world.

If you visit the library in person, you will find copies of the latest issues of *Building*, *Property Week* and *Estates Gazette*, as well as back issues of *Modus* and *Journals*. You can also access *isurv* from the guest wifi in the London and Birmingham offices.

Fiona Fogden is the knowledge and information services manager based at RICS, Parliament Square. If you plan to visit and need support, please email knowledge@rics.org in case Fiona is not on site on the date of your visit. The library is open whenever the building is open, but it is not staffed every day.

You can access e-books through VLeBooks (over 300 titles) and online journals through Emerald Insight (20 titles), included as part of your membership. For more information go to www.rics.org/profession-standards/knowledge-and-information-services or use this QR code:



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- JCT Delivering Construction Projects
- Property Development Strategies
- Global Introduction to Whole Life Carbon Assessment

CERTIFICATE

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Professional standards

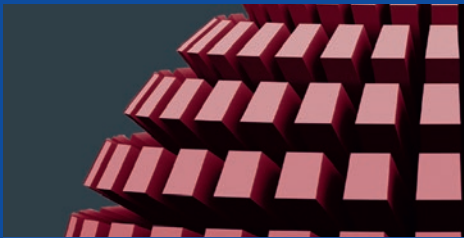
A commitment to excellence that sets you apart

RICS' internationally recognised standards set the global benchmarks and help the profession respond to new risks and opportunities.



Whole life carbon assessment for the built environment

A framework designed to reduce carbon impact over a building's entire lifecycle, empowering professionals to make more sustainable choices for our planet.



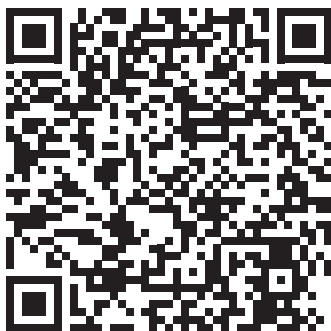
Red Book Global Standards

High standard for valuation, ensuring credibility, consistency, and reliability that clients can count on worldwide. The updated standard becomes effective on 31 January 2025.



Rules of Conduct

The cornerstone of ethical practice ensuring that professionals act with integrity, safeguarding public and client interests.



Elevate your practice,
enhance your credibility,

Learn more at
rics.org/standards

