

INTRODUCTION

As I write this I have reflected not only on the challenges and opportunities CIBSE faces but also on a number of strategic drivers, well outside our control, but which are likely to have a considerable impact upon us. The temptation, of course, is to predict what the future may hold, but 'crystal ball gazing' is at best an imprecise art and I would suggest the proper reaction is to stay "nimble & agile"; something that needs to be at the heart of CIBSE, ensuring we offer the best possible service to our members and prospective members, while serving society in its' widest form.

I have spoken about **Brexit** before, and it is even more evident now that there is still great uncertainty as we approach March 2019 deadline. At the same time there is clarity emerging around energy and buildings, with the Committee for Climate Change making it very clear that we must redouble our efforts to reduce energy demand and emissions. Nonetheless, the companies I speak to remain very concerned, and uncertainty in the current political climate is what no business needs. Internally within CIBSE, we are concerned there may be a sudden and unexpected change in the market for our services and products, but right now all we can do is monitor the situation as it changes and be ready to respond.

The sudden, but not unexpected news that **Carillion** had been put into compulsory liquidation will have very dramatic and caustic effects on the large supply chain and especially on the many thousands of SMEs. For many years the challenges of PFI and the very combative style has driven down profit margins to minute levels while minimising the ability to deliver a quality product, and has in many cases undermined the original concept. The real question for the industry is whether a new model can be created that delivers a well-engineered solution with reasonable profit margins that the client is prepared to pay for.

In many ways I suspect that the **Grenfell Tower Fire** is likely to have the most influence on CIBSE and our members in the months to come. While the police inquiry and the Public Inquiry, chaired by Sir Martin Moore-Bick, appear to be finding progress tough going the Independent Review into Building Regulations and Fire Safety, chaired by Dame Judith Hackitt, is being driven hard. The Interim Report came out just before Christmas and I commend the summary to you, which you can find here https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/668831/Independent_Review_of_Building_Regulations_and_Fire_Safety_web_accessible.pdf

The final report is now due out in May 2018. For CIBSE there is a huge amount for us to do to support Dame Judith and her team. The Society of Façade Engineers and our Fire Engineers have really stepped up to the mark, and we are likely to have a role in the review of the Approved Documents within Building Regulations. Above all we have to find a way to work with the other Professional Bodies. To quote Dame Judith:

***“Recommendation:** There is a need to be certain that those working on the design, construction, inspection and maintenance of complex and high-risk buildings are suitably qualified. The professional and accreditation bodies have an opportunity to demonstrate that they are capable of establishing a robust, comprehensive and coherent system covering all disciplines for work on such buildings. If they are able to come together and develop a joined up system covering all levels of qualification in relevant disciplines this will provide the framework for regulation to mandate the use of suitable, qualified professionals who can demonstrate that their skills are up to date. I would ask these bodies to work together now to propose such a system as soon as practicable. I will launch this work at a summit in early 2018”*

Dame Judith has now launched six work strands and as I write CIBSE is suggesting appropriate people for the Review Team to consider. I am in no doubt that Dame Judith is determined to deliver a step-change and as an engineer herself is clear that any change is to be properly thought through and well considered. Personally I do welcome this approach and thank all the CIBSE people involved for their unstinting support. As ever, CIBSE will seek to contribute constructively as the professional bodies seek to respond to Dame Judith.

Build2Perform We were generally delighted to see the enthusiasm for Build2Perform held on the 21-22 Nov 2017 at Olympia. We had well over 1400 attendees and 170 speakers, in seven theatres and 70 hours of CPD. The feedback was hugely positive and for our first event of this type, it was fantastic. We attracted more members than ever to one event, even with 66% of attendees being non-members. One aim was to profile our special interest groups and recognise our volunteers. Of course there is much to learn for this coming year and lots to improve on and we are determined to do so. We are already consulting the Groups and Societies, have reformed our Advisory Committee and we welcome ideas and suggestions from Council. Those who did attend will be delighted to know that we even have an offer of some professional advice on the acoustics!

The model is based upon “free attendance” so our exhibitors and sponsors provide the funding; financially we had a very small surplus and the take-up for this year is very encouraging. However, we do need you to support this event and ensure it becomes a very special CIBSE event indeed. **Dates for your diary Build2Perform 27-28 November 2018 – please reserve the dates!**

CIBSE UAE Technical Conference & YEN Global Conference in Dubai Although I wasn't able to attend the Dubai Conference, I understand this important event was a great success as our President returned full of enthusiasm. We now have established a Global YEN Conference in the CIBSE calendar and for our fast developing UAE Region this was a landmark event in their development. I want to say thank you for all the support and effort that went into the event from volunteers and companies in the UAE, it is really appreciated.

Presidential Visit to Hong Kong & Shanghai Hong Kong is our largest region with 2,800 members and every year the President Elect visits Hong Kong. This year, with our first President from Hong Kong Region, it was a very special event at the end of November. One of the many highlights was Peter Wong delivering his Presidential Address at the British Consulate-General in Hong Kong to a packed audience of well over 170. The timing was especially good as Thomas Chan, a prominent CIBSE member, is the President of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE). Thomas with Peter and Stephen Lisk, as our President Elect travelled to Shanghai and also saw the significant enthusiasm for CIBSE as well over 120 people listened to Peter and Stephen at the CIBSE Reception. It is very hard to accurately describe the influence and traction of CIBSE having a President from the Region when in wet, grey London, but it is hugely significant and much of that is down to our President's outstanding commitment.

ASHRAE Winter Meeting As is our custom the President and President Elect travelled to Chicago to represent CIBSE at the ASHRAE Winter Meeting. With 3,500 participants it is always impressive, but also over 70 national HVAC associations from around the globe attend so it provides an opportunity to meet others and appreciate the global reach of engineering within the built environment. The AHR EXPO that is also a part of the Winter Meeting continues to grow with 2,700 exhibitors and 73,000 visitors spread out over some 550,000 sq ft, so that is something for us to aim for with Build2Perform.

IT/CRM At long last I am delighted to report some positive news on our new CRM system which is now bedded-in and starting to deliver the information, service and efficiencies which we had hoped for – it has just taken so much longer than we anticipated. We await the

Learning Management System (LMS) but that is very near now. Also the Board have approved a new Digital Services Development Schedule, giving priority on improving our members experience and supporting the many Regions, Groups, Societies and Networks that make-up CIBSE. In the coming months we have lots to do but everything is much more positive.

Our next major challenge is the forthcoming **General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR**, which is being described as the biggest shake-up of data protection legislation in a generation. Many of you will already have received information on this, and be sure that there is more to come as we seek to encourage as many of our members and of those who participate in the Groups as non-members to opt in to continuing to receive the information that we currently provide for them.

I am quite sure that 2017, from a CIBSE staff perspective, has been a very tough year indeed. There have been significant challenges and we are now in a much better position to drive-on! I want to say a sincere thank you not only to the staff who have borne the brunt of the difficulties but also to the Trustees who have maintained their support and positive encouragement to us – Thank You! We enter 2018 much more positively and with enthusiasm.

We have much to look forward to. The **2018 Building Performance Awards** at the Grosvenor House, 6 February will have just taken place when we meet and our **2018 Technical Symposium** at LSBU, London, 12 -13 April looks highly likely to break all records. But most importantly of all it is the people that make CIBSE, your passion, commitment and drive – so a big thank you to all our volunteers, who make CIBSE a very special place.