

NASC

# Scaffolding Insider

NEWS | FEATURES | COMMERCIAL | HEALTH & SAFETY

JANUARY 2024

## STANDING OVATION

Behind the scenes at three remarkable projects

### RETURN TO STABILITY

Taking the politics out of infrastructure projects

### WINDOW DRESSING?

Will Procurement Bill change anything?

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## From the Editor

Hello and welcome to issue three of **Scaffolding Insider**. I hope 2024 has started off strongly for you and your business.

The Government has finally passed new legislation around procurement in the public sector. The Procurement Bill 2023 has been a long time coming and while its ambitions have always been laudable, it's not entirely clear that those ambitions will be realised by this Bill. It won't come into force until towards the end of this year but it feels like there is plenty of work to be done between now and then through secondary legislation and via procurement teams on the ground to ensure it doesn't become a damp squib. Read more on page 7.

Speaking of damp squibs, there will be many companies still reeling from the news about HS2, with a significant chunk of their order book being excised at a stroke by the Government. It seems that infrastructure projects are never delivered trouble-free and often fall victim to politics. On pages 13-14, you can read one expert's view on how all this uncertainty could be avoided.

No room for uncertainty on the jobs featured in our cover story, with precision technical solutions being the order of the day for these projects in the entertainment and recreation sector. You can read how three NASC members tackled the highly complex scaffolding and access requirements as renovations were made to BAFTA HQ, The Printworks in Manchester and HMS Victory – see pages 8-10.

On page 11, we take a look inside the new Guidance document on mental health, SG38:23. Dealing with people's mental health issues in the workplace can seem a daunting task but this very practical document breaks that task down and makes it feel much more manageable. Have a look at the article and I'd encourage you to explore the Guidance too.

We have plenty of news from around the construction industry on pages 4-6 and there's NASC news on page 12, including an address from Chief Executive Clive Dickin as he reflects on 2023 and looks ahead to a busy 2024. That busy-ness is already evident, as you'll see on page 12, which contains details of new NASC appointments, a brand new opportunity to meet the Chief Executive at regional surgeries, plus regional meetings and a whole host of valuable webinars. There is a lot going on.

If you have any projects you'd like to see in the magazine or any views you'd like to share, please do get in touch.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy the magazine.



**Nick Campion**  
Editor

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# GOVERNMENT GOES NUCLEAR

The government is exploring plans to build a new large-scale nuclear plant, with ministers saying the project would be the biggest expansion of the sector in 70 years, reducing reliance on overseas supply. The new plant would quadruple energy supplies by 2050.

It is worth noting that there are concerns regarding both existing nuclear projects being behind schedule and over-budget, and also whether this huge investment in notoriously slow-to-commission plants is the right step next for UK energy security. With Labour backing the Government's proposals, however, it seems like the government's plan is likely to play out, which should create some major opportunities for scaffolding and access companies working in this sector.

The government's Civil Nuclear Roadmap is to enhance the UK's energy independence by exploring a new site



Prime Minister Rishi Sunak

Credit Chris McAndrew

for another nuclear power station on a similar scale to the £30bn plants under construction at Hinkley Point in Somerset and imminent at Sizewell in Suffolk. It has been widely reported that the leading candidates would include Wylfa on Anglesey or Moorside in Cumbria.

The announcement also pledged £300m to produce nuclear reactor fuel in the UK, currently only commercially produced in Russia, which the government said would lower bills and improve energy security.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said nuclear was the *'perfect antidote to the energy challenges facing Britain'*.

In the government's roadmap document, there is a section on developing the nuclear supply chain, which says: *"Our supply chain is renowned across the world and many countries view the UK as a key partner as they develop their own civil nuclear programmes. To meet our future nuclear ambitions, we need to ensure the UK has a resilient supply chain with the required capabilities and capacity to meet the demands of ramping up our nuclear deployment and delivering our existing decommissioning requirements.*

*"Setting out our wider nuclear ambitions in this Roadmap is a crucial step in providing the nuclear industry with the certainty it needs to invest in the supply chain. But we are going further. Recognising that companies in the supply chain do not solely operate in the civil space, we are working towards optimal alignment on supply chain management with the nuclear defence sector and wider infrastructure projects.*

*"We are also aiming to address wider barriers, such as accessibility for Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the different requirements for standards across nuclear sites and competitiveness of UK companies. Through our policy interventions we are aiming to support the nuclear sector to develop a supply chain that is resilient, accessible to business of all sizes (including SMEs), capable and competitive both domestically and internationally."*

Read more here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-nuclear-roadmap-to-2050/civil-nuclear-roadmap-to-2050-accessible-webpage>

**UK CIVIL NUCLEAR SITES  
(ENGLAND, WALES AND SCOTLAND)**



PICTURE CREDIT: www.gov.uk



*“ We are also aiming to address wider barriers, such as accessibility for Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the different requirements for standards across nuclear sites and competitiveness of UK companies. ”*

**CIJC publishes 2024 holiday entitlement guide**

The Construction Industry Joint Council (CIJC) has announced the details of the holiday entitlement for 2024 for the construction industry.

The annual entitlement is 22 days a year, plus eight days of public/bank holidays, making an annual total of 30 days. The concept of Easter and Summer holidays has been discontinued in favour of “Other Holidays”, with the remaining 15 days of industry holidays taken at any time by agreement with the employer.

Following the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) in the case of Bear Scotland & Ors -v- Fulton & Ors, the method of calculating annual industry holiday pay has changed, and companies need to familiarise themselves with this change.



**Vistry forces through price cuts on subcontractor packages**

After beginning negotiations with subcontractors in October for price discounts on contracts from January and all new work going forward, housebuilder Vistry has announced that key supply chain partners have now agreed to cost reductions.

Greg Fitzgerald, Chief Executive, said Vistry’s growth strategy, and the high level of visibility on forward sales and build programmes under the Partnerships model, had helped talks as it allowed Vistry to offer greater continuity of work to suppliers.

Fitzgerald, who will take on the combined role of chairman and chief executive at the group when the present chairman Ralph Findlay steps down in May, said Vistry would exceed profit expectations for 2023. Adjusted pre-tax profit is now expected to be in line with the £418m recorded last year.



Greg Fitzgerald

## Inflation pushes HS2 costs ever higher

The cost of building HS2 between London and Birmingham has ballooned to nearly £67bn at today's prices, according to an estimate by HS2 chief Sir Jon Thompson. This is nearly double what the entire project, including the planned Phase Two routes to both Manchester and Leeds, was expected to cost in 2013.

Sir Jon made his estimation while giving evidence to the Transport Select Committee. His figures are at odds with the government's present expectation, set out in its recent Network North plan, which said the truncated project would be delivered at £45bn.

Sir Jon said that after three years of industry-wide serious cost inflation – in steel and concrete in particular – around £8bn-£10bn should be added to the estimate for an indication of the true cost at today's prices. Sir Jon also told the committee that he could not guarantee costs would not rise further while contractors were incentivised through cost-plus contracts to spend money.

He added that HS2 was currently trying to renegotiate terms with contractors and for the first time had put in place proper management control systems to keep tabs on individual contracts.



Jon Thompson

## Henk destroys scaffolding

Sutton Council has launched an investigation into a dramatic scaffold collapse on a Sutton street on 2 January as Storm Henk brought gale-force winds and chaos to the area. The scaffolding collapsed on Sutton's high street as it was buffeted by 60mph winds.

Fortunately, there were no injuries to bystanders and the damage to the surrounding area was minimal – but it could have been so much worse.

Sutton Council is collaborating with the police and the scaffolding company to determine the root cause of the collapse. A spokesperson from Sutton Council stated, "Following yesterday's incident, the Council's Health and Safety team visited the site and worked with the scaffolding company and the police to ensure the high street was made safe. The scaffolding was cleared to ensure that businesses were able to open this morning."

The council has also reported the incident to the Health and Safety Executive, which will investigate the matter. This multi-agency approach aims to uncover the truth behind the incident and ensure that lessons are learned to prevent similar accidents in the future.



PICTURE CREDIT:  
Instagram-standipalma

## Glenigan says confidence is recovering

Glenigan's UK Construction Industry Forecast 2023-2025 says the construction industry will continue to struggle in the face of economic challenges but output is forecast to grow by 15% in the next two years. The market analyst suggests the rest of this year will be dominated by cautious private sector investment and a housing market slowdown.

It predicts a decline across most non-residential sectors during the rest of this year amid weak UK economic growth and high interest rates, with project starts falling 20%. The company does expect growth in 2024 of 8% and a further 7% in 2025, pointing to a firm development pipeline that is already supporting a rise in industrial and office starts.

Glenigan's economic director Allan Wilen said: "After sharp falls in starts and a challenging set of economic circumstances in 2023, construction can expect gradual improvement in market conditions over the next two years."

"Interest rates now appear to be at their peak, and a gradual easing in rates from 2024 should help to rebuild private investors' and homebuyers' confidence and lift private sector activity."

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### Wates secures Victoria House

Wates has secured the conversion of a grade-II listed landmark building in central London into a hi-tech life sciences hub. The Victoria House scheme is the brainchild of joint venture developers Oxford Properties and Pioneer Group. They plan to convert the 300,000ft<sup>2</sup> Bloomsbury Square building into Grade A wet lab-enabled life sciences space. In the conversion, the main fabric of the building, including its heritage finishes and features will be retained, along with the existing original windows.

### BAM boss to retire

James Wimpenny, Executive Director, Construction, UK and Ireland Division, BAM, will retire at the end of this month. He will step down following a 38-year career with BAM, having joined in 1985 as a management trainee. Simon Finnie, Executive Director, Ventures, UK and Ireland Division, will take on the additional role of leading the Construction segment while a successor is recruited.

### Higgins gets the nod

Notting Hill Genesis has appointed Higgins Partnerships as its development partner for the £40m Saxon Wharf mixed-use development in Greenwich, south London. Construction will start next month on the scheme which will feature 145 one, two and three-bedroom homes and ground floor commercial space across the part 13, part 17 storey building designed by architects, BPTW.

### Stewart Milne folds

The Stewart Milne group is now in administration and the house builder has ceased trading with the loss of 217 jobs. Administrator Teneo has shut all sites, saying: "The administrators will shortly be contacting all known customers with reservations, creditors, suppliers, subcontractors and hired plant/equipment providers. If you are a supplier, please note that no further orders should be fulfilled, and delivery to the sites should not be attempted, unless otherwise advised by the administrators."



### Caspian-AFIX partnership

Scunthorpe-based scaffolding hire and sales firm Caspian Group Ltd has announced a strategic partnership with AFIX Group UK, bringing the innovative AFIX Fast X52 modular system scaffolding to the north of England.

# Procurement's 'transformational' new Act

The long-awaited Procurement Act 2023 finally received Royal Assent on 26 October 2023. This will see the UK adopt its own bespoke set of rules to govern public procurement from October 2024.



The overriding aim for the new Act is to move away from the universal language of the EU Directives and to consolidate the wide range of contract regulations currently in use. While this may seem a significant milestone in the transformation of public procurement in the UK, there is actually still a lot of work to be done to support its implementation and to understand how it will operate in practice.

Scaffolding and access companies enjoy a considerable slice of the public sector construction market, with spending on all suppliers in this sector of around £23bn a year across central and local government and the NHS.

Following Royal Assent, the Cabinet Office stated that it is planning for the necessary secondary legislation to be laid early this year and anticipates the new regime will come into effect from October 2024. It seems reasonable to say that it will only be once we start to see more of the detail that we will get a better idea as to how the new regime is intended to work.

How transformational the Act will be depends largely on how the new regime is implemented in practice by procurement teams, who are often already over-stretched just delivering their day job, let alone getting to grips with new and complex legislation. But having the ability to make the most of the promises within the legislation is crucial to take full advantage of its perceived greater flexibilities. There is always the risk that without sufficient resources to make the most of the six-month preparation period, procurement teams will fall back on to what is familiar.

The government has issued Guidance in a document called: 'The Procurement Act 2023: A short guide for suppliers'. It states: "Public procurement law is changing. The reforms will shake up our outdated system and improve the way procurement is done, so that every pound goes further for our public services.

"The new Procurement Act will benefit suppliers of all sizes, particularly start-ups, scale-ups and small businesses. It will create a central digital platform for suppliers to register and store their details so that they can be used for multiple bids, and see all opportunities in one place. Simplified bidding processes will make it easier to bid, negotiate and work in partnership with the public sector.

"Commercial frameworks will be more flexible, so prospective suppliers are not shut out for long periods of time. The Act will remove bureaucratic barriers and level the playing field for smaller businesses so they can compete for more contracts.

"There will be prompt payment for more businesses in public sector supply chains. And a stronger exclusions framework will take tougher action on underperforming suppliers.

"These changes will drive innovation, deliver better outcomes and embed transparency right through the commercial lifecycle, so everyone can access procurement data and see how money is spent."

Read more here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-act-2023-short-guides/the-procurement-act-2023-a-short-guide-for-suppliers-html>

This does indeed sound transformational – but will this be the reality?



Lynn Way

Lynn Way, NASC Past President and Financial Director of Chris Sedgeman Scaffolding Ltd, comments: "I fear that the new Act will actually make things harder for smaller businesses when it comes to winning new contracts. It's already so complex that many smaller companies have to bring in a consultant to help them with the tendering paperwork; there are a lot of scaffolders

out there who are well known for being good on the ground but who feel alienated by this process and the new Act won't change that. There are still too many hoops to jump through. So the reliable companies who give consistently good service will still lose out to those that can write good tender responses.

"Regarding payment, the Bill has warm words for speeding them up but when you're Tier 2 or 3, you can still be waiting 60 or 90 days. Companies always find a way to get around the 30-days by adding further processes."



Matthew Cousins

Picking up on this point is Matthew Cousins, Commercial Director at Apex Scaffolding (Exeter) and Chair of NASC's Contracts committee, says: "The main problem for companies like mine – we have just over 50 employees – is always payments. We have no problem winning public sector work, especially as we're NASC-accredited, but because we don't

usually work for the client direct, there are ways and means for the companies that employ us to delay payment. The new legislation allows for notices to be given before payment, so unscrupulous contractors can easily delay if they wish. This is also the case in the current legislation. There's nothing new that helps us go to the main contractor and demand payment.

"On the plus side, a central portal for opportunities is good as there are so many different ones right now; and working through frameworks should be improved. On the whole, the new legislation reads as if it will work better for companies who work direct for the client rather than as contractors to the main contractor.

"Overall, it feels like this is largely a change in terminology rather than substance."

# A new life for iconic landmarks

by Phil Royle

Great Britain is full of iconic, landmark historical buildings and the conservation of these British heritage gems stands as a cornerstone in preserving the rich historical and architectural legacy of the UK's nations.

The UK's fine architectural structures not only embody the artistic and cultural achievements of their respective periods, but serve as tangible links to the past, fostering a sense of national identity and continuity.

Organisations like Historic England and the National Trust play pivotal roles in safeguarding these heritage structures. Through meticulous restoration, maintenance, and adaptive reuse, these entities ensure the structural integrity and cultural significance of these buildings endure for generations to come.

This is where the high-quality, specialist scaffolding comes in: these companies are the ones who can provide safe access and egress and essential weather protection to these heritage buildings, allowing contractors to work their magic preserving them – in collaborations with those who supply quality access materials, deliver bespoke engineering solutions, and those who offer other supplementary support.

Here, we meet three recent classic examples of NASC members working hard to safeguard the future of these landmark historical structures, all in the field of entertainment and recreation.

## PHD Modular Access Services: National Museum of the Royal Navy

The HMS Victory – one of the world's best-loved ships and national treasures – embarked on a hugely significant conservation milestone as the ship's rotten outer shell was painstakingly removed and replaced with new oak by skilled craftspeople.

Thanks to the scaffolding access, repairs have been made to the ship's structural framework, and she is being fully re-rigged, in a process lasting 10 to 15 years and costing £35 million.



For this work to be carried out, the ship needed to be fully enclosed by temporary scaffolding. Enter PHD Modular Access and system scaffolding manufacturer, Layher UK.

The scaffold structure to enable the renovation works was a combination of temporary roof protection, semi-enclosed visitor experience, working access platforms and enclosed loading bays.

The temporary roof was designed and made in a further combination of Layher and Dessa systems to accommodate the ship's existing infrastructure and mast retaining cables, whilst they remained in position during Stage 1 of the temporary works.

The HMS Victory is an extremely complex shape that required a 3D survey and 3D design. PHD's in-house design team were able to create a fantastic 3D concept that helped them to design out any risks and also showed the client what the scheme would look like before it was built.

The landmark project was crowned the NASC Large Project of the Year 2022.



## Connolly Scaffolding: The Printworks, Manchester

The Printworks is a social hub within the heart of Manchester with over 5,000 daily visitors, and also accommodating the UK's largest cinema.

Dating back to 1873, the Printworks once housed the largest printing press in Europe. In 1999, a £110m conversion was carried out to transform the establishment into a 365,000ft<sup>2</sup> multi-entertainment complex lodging an assortment of venues, including 25 independent businesses and a 23-screen cinema. Valued at over £1.2m, the current project is to undertake a complete external and internal refurbishment and the installation of a 900m<sup>2</sup> digital ceiling, which will be Europe's largest LED ceiling.

Connolly Scaffolding's tender placed emphasis on a strategy which planned to include three different types of scaffolding – the best option for the client in the complex circumstances.

The unique nature of this job includes the requirement to maintain the economic functioning of the Printworks' vendors and normal street access; the site's structural design also makes this job particularly demanding.

On the exterior, system scaffolding was required to assist in the external renovations and to allow new signage to be craned to its new position on the roof.

In utilising quicker, modular scaffolding, Connolly were able to maximise the allotted time given to erect the scaffolding, despite the strict working hours, with works only allowed after the complex had closed at 2am.

The interior consisted of a specialised combination of scaffolding types. In addition to system scaffolding, a series of traditional tube and fitting towers linked with bridging beam scaffolds across two levels. This enabled Connolly to effectively negotiate the timeframe restrictions and to efficiently fulfil the client's brief demanding minimal scaffolding at ground level.



The use of tube and fitting scaffolding at street level enabled them to construct scaffolding fitting with the uneven contour of the courtyard below whilst also allowing unhindered access to the pedestrianised street.

The internal series of tube and fitting towers were linked together at four metres and 20 metres – allowing normal functioning of the street below and business as usual, essentially by reducing the amount of scaffolding obstructing the street.

A bridging system scaffolding installed on top of the tube and fitting towers served the function of linking the scaffolding types together to create one constant working platform throughout the whole of the Printworks – permitting the installation of the aforementioned 900m<sup>2</sup> digital ceiling.

Connolly Scaffolding's experience of working in city centres on high-profile projects – including heritage structures – allowed them to meticulously plan and design every detail, whilst effectively communicating the plans and designs to the clients, principal contractor and individual businesses that were to be affected by the refurbishments.





## GKR Scaffolding Ltd: BAFTA HQ, Piccadilly

195 Piccadilly has been the home of BAFTA since 1974. The building, built in 1883, has undergone minor refurbishments in the last 140 years, with the latest renovation being the most significant in its history.

This major refurbishment includes renovation of the 227-seat Princess Anne Theatre, and raising the original roof lights which had been covered up for 45 years to create a new floor and gallery area. Additionally, a complete refurbishment of the building will create work and meeting space for those working in the creative arts.

Making scaffolding centre stage, GKR was commissioned by Knight Harwood to design and create access solutions both internally and externally, whilst being sensitive to the heritage of the building.

The project was a series of challenges as not one part of the scaffolding at BAFTA was founded from a baseplate and sole board. Everything required being suspended, cantilevered, required steel support or complex ties.

GKR installed a 32-metre temporary HAKI roof, covering the entire building with nine lines of Nico Rail that has the capacity to lift 1000kg each to the underside of the temporary roof. The HAKI roof is free-standing for the top 14 metres – so tie loads into the building for the temporary roof are colossal.

These works have allowed for the original glass lanterns to be repositioned one floor higher as a whole new mezzanine floor is being installed. With Knight Harwood completely demolishing the upper floors, GKR worked with checking engineers, Luckling and Clark, to develop a diaphragm wall tie system to support the façade walls and the temporary roof. They also provided a heavy duty birdcage access to demolish the existing floors – which simultaneously acted as a skeleton to tie the internal walls together while they were being rebuilt.

Naturally, being a heritage structure, the number of ties themselves needed careful consideration.

GKR's preliminary design included 86 ties to the Piccadilly elevation due to the high tie loads caused by the large span HAKI roof. However, after consultation with English Heritage, it was agreed to reduce the number of ties by 60%. This required GKR to design a 'super tie' that would take the load capacity of three ties – and would load share from the scaffold back into these reduced tie points: innovation in action.

The GKR 'super tie' solution was designed to take a 30kn load, achieved by drilling M18mm thread rod through the entire wall and placing a 250mm x 250mm x 30mm plate within the inner wall recess or connecting directly to the diaphragm wall support scaffold internally.

Externally, there was the same plate thickness with 2 x 2400mm scaffold tubes welded to the plates; the tie was connected to the tread rod with 2 x M18 bolts.

The load share was a combination of plan bracing with multiple check fittings and whaling beams between tie points. The last tie point was 14m below the roof due to load restrictions on the top two floors of the building.

The entire Piccadilly elevation was founded on huge spreader steels spanning the scaffold loads onto the vault walls below. Above a live shopping arcade, the North elevation had to be cantilevered out of formed pockets in the building façade to provide access, support and protection above this busy live area. The scaffold was designed to be erected fully tethered.

Additionally, scaffold standards could not be used for the East and South elevations in order to protect the adjacent church and churchyard. GKR had to design a gallows bracket system as no loadings were allowed into this historic area. The gallows were constructed at second floor level and cleverly tied into the second floor building support system.

To the East elevation, 750mm upright Apollo beams were used – drill tied to the party wall to provide roof support. These beams also acted as a roof tying system to resist uplift from the roof in this area.

GKR MD Neil Rowsell said: *"BAFTA has been the perfect job for those of us that love what we do. The level of engineering and planning required to create such individual solutions for every single part of the job has been a satisfying challenge. The GKR team overcame significant engineering challenges and the logistics of working on a busy London street, whilst being sensitive to the aesthetics of a historic building. BAFTA took back residency at 195 Piccadilly in 2021 after sensitively turning this 140-year-old building into a modern hub for the creative industries."*

**Do you have a project that  
you're particularly proud of?**

We'd like to hear from you, email us at [editor@nasc.org.uk](mailto:editor@nasc.org.uk) with a summary of the project and maybe it too could feature in Scaffolding Insider.

# NEW MENTAL HEALTH GUIDANCE GOES LIVE

NASC has now launched its latest Mental Health Guidance, SG38:23 Guidance on Mental Health Wellbeing, and is encouraging all members of NASC and the scaffolding and access sector at large to commit their focus to this critical issue.

In this brief article, we will look at the Guidance in general and at one area in particular but would encourage all companies to get their own copy of the Guidance so they can be better prepared to deal with any mental health challenges in the workforce and to proactively seek to reduce the risk.

SG38:23 introduces the topic of mental health and puts into context just how important it is to be aware of it. Two people a day in construction complete suicide and many thousands struggle daily with mental health issues. The



Guidance adds: *“The construction industry lifestyle is undoubtedly both challenging and stressful. Long and demanding working hours, working away from home, on site for weeks at a time and the lingering unease in the industry. These are just some of the factors contributing to poor mental health. “In a workforce that is*

*predominantly male, specific risks associated with male mental health also need to be considered. The “tough guy” image widespread in the construction industry is very much to blame. Asking for help and opening up about emotions are just not things that come naturally to many of those working in the industry. The combination of these factors results in many suffering in silence.”*



The Guidance advises that not all mental health challenges become mental health illnesses, especially if we are able to take action early. It also advises on the signs we should look for that someone is struggling.

A particularly useful section explains a range of steps that employers can take to help their employees thrive at work. You could look on this simple, practical advice as a highly effective risk mitigation strategy. However, if problems do occur, then there is also excellent advice on what employers can do – an area where many employers have previously felt uncertain as to how to proceed.

**Once you’ve opened up a dialogue with your employee about their mental health, the priority is to develop positive steps to address the key issues they’re struggling with. Clear policies on workplace adjustments are crucial in supporting staff to cope and their recovery. Many adjustments for mental health are generally simple, practicable and cost effective; see some potential changes below.**

## Potential changes

- flexible hours or change to start/finish time
- change of work space e.g. quieter, more/less busy
- working from home (although it’s important to have regular phone contact so people remain connected and don’t feel isolated)
- changes to break times
- provision of quiet rooms
- return to work policies e.g. phased return – reduced hours gradually building up
- relaxing absence rules and limits for those with disability-related sickness absence
- agreement to give employee leave at short notice and time off for appointments related to their mental health, such as therapy and counselling.

This is not an exhaustive list; employers should explore with the individual their specific needs and be as creative as possible when thinking about how to address these issues.

## Potential changes to the role itself (temporary or permanent)

- reallocation of some tasks or changes to people’s job description and duties
- redeployment to a more suitable role
- training and support to apply for vacancies and secondments in other departments

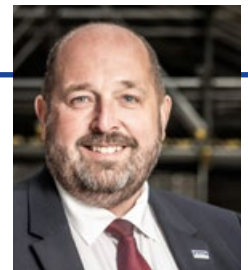
## Extra support

- increased supervision or support from manager
- extra training, coaching or mentoring
- extra help with managing and negotiating workload
- mentor or ‘buddy’ systems
- mediation which can help if there are difficulties between colleagues
- mental health support group or disability network group
- identifying a ‘safe space’ in the workplace where the person can have some time out, contact their buddy or other sources of support
- encourage people to work on building up their resilience and doing things that support good mental health such as exercise, meditation or eating healthily
- encourage people to be more aware of their mental health state and reflect on what factors affect it in the workplace
- provide regular opportunities to discuss, review and reflect on people’s positive achievements – this can help people to build up positive self-esteem and develop skills to better manage their triggers for poor mental health
- consider providing access to counselling.

Earlier this month, NASC ran a webinar on SG38:23 and the recording of this is now available to view at:

<https://nasc.org.uk/events/>





# THE VALUE OF A NASC MEMBERSHIP

**Clive Dickin, CEO of NASC, has written to all members, reflecting on NASC in 2023 and looking ahead to 2024:**

*“2023 was a year of resilience. Rising costs, material shortages, and evolving safety demands tested us, but NASC members, driven by our shared mission of exceptional standards, navigated these complexities with purpose.*

*“This year saw NASC commit to providing members with a quality membership package: NASC championed groundbreaking quality standards to the industry, cementing NASC as the hallmark of excellence and the supplier of choice. NASC launched its new Vision, Mission, and Strategy, directing a new business plan that has resulted in NASC being a solutions provider for members, advocating sensible core policy areas that benefit the membership. For example, we are dedicating resources nurturing a strong talent pipeline, to attract diverse talent and showcase the rewarding career paths our industry offers. NASC improved its membership charter, becoming more inclusive and aiding more contractors to improve their standards. NASC published yet more guidelines, covering subjects such as mental health*

*in SG38, through to revised updates for SG6. And through exceptional communication, which saw the launch of NASC’s new eNewsletter, webinar series, industry magazine Scaffolding Insider and the groundbreaking Scaffex24 Conference and Expo, NASC will keep you informed, connected, and empowered.*

*“2024 demands even greater commitment. NASC will harness digital innovation to streamline operations and amplify your voices and will lead the industry in showcasing responsible practices and environmental solutions. And always, we will uphold our core values of ethical, respectful, and professional conduct. We will be out meeting members, both at CEO surgeries and at events through the year.*

*“NASC membership is a declaration of your commitment to building a better future for your business and your credibility to your clients. Thank you for your unwavering support. Together, we will emerge stronger, more united in our mission to drive quality and safety in our sector.”*

## NEW MEMBERS OF THE TEAM

NASC has welcomed a number of new starters to the team and congratulated other existing members of staff on their new roles. Sarah Philips is promoted to Head of Operations, while Steve Kearney becomes Head of Technical. Aleksandra Jawor becomes Digital Marketing Executive, and membership enquiries will be managed temporarily by Charles Martin.

NASC also welcomes new starters Marie Kuffour and Philip Goddard. Marie will be heading up NASC events, having run her own successful events business for over five years, while Philip has extensive experience working with high profile clients during his time with TalkTalk, as well as gaining insights into the construction sector from his time at Construction Line. Jamie McGuire has been promoted to Head of Business Development and will have Aleksandra, Marie, Philip, and Sophie Price, Marketing Manager, on his team.

## FAREWELL TO DAVID MOSLEY

After more than two decades of dedicated service at NASC, David Mosley is leaving his role as Director of Training in order to take up a full time role as Managing Director of CISRS. David has carried out the role of CISRS MD for a number of years alongside his NASC role; this move will allow him to dedicate more time to CISRS and the training industry.

David’s leadership, expertise and dedication have been instrumental in shaping NASC and the industry as a whole. Clive Dickin, CEO of NASC, said: *“David Mosley has been an integral part of NASC’s success over the years. His contributions, and personality, will be sorely missed within the team. We sincerely wish him all the best and look forward to continue working with him as part of our close relationship with CISRS.”*

## MEET THE CEO

As part of NASC’s commitment to meet members and non-members, as well as main contractors and clients, NASC CEO Clive Dickin will be holding regional surgeries once a month around the UK. This will be your chance to speak directly to the CEO about any topic you choose, as he continues to take NASC directly to the people – and takes your views and ideas back to the Board.

The first regional surgery is on Thursday 15 February in Glasgow. NASC members are invited to meet Clive one-to-one in the morning to discuss their local issues and how NASC can help. The afternoon sessions will be available for prospective members to meet Clive to learn more about the value of NASC membership.

The next surgery will be in Swansea on Thursday 14 March, with more cities to be added in due course. If you are interested in attending, please email [ceo@nasc.org.uk](mailto:ceo@nasc.org.uk) to book your meeting slot.

## REGIONAL MEETINGS

NASC has announced the latest dates for its regional meetings.

They are:

- Tuesday 27 February – South West & South Wales
- Wednesday 28 February – Midlands
- Thursday 29 February – Northern & North Wales
- Tuesday 5 March – London & South East
- Thursday 7 March – Scotland & NI

## WEBINAR PROGRAMME

NASC’s webinar series continues to explore key elements of scaffolding business. Find out more and register by scanning the QR code or go to <https://nasc.org.uk/events/>

- **24 January:** NASC & CITB present Spotlight on Training Funding Entitlement
- **31 January:** Management of Fall Protection Equipment





PICTURE CREDIT: HS2

PICTURE CREDIT: Colne Valley Viaduct, HS2

# HOW TO ENSURE LONG-TERM UK INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY

By Robbie Owen, Partner, Parliamentary Agent, Pinsent Masons

The UK government's decision in October to cancel phases 2a and 2b of HS2 demonstrated how much the UK's economic infrastructure projects can be caught up in short-term politics and the British electoral cycle. A change of approach is needed to deliver the infrastructure the UK needs in the long-term

It is completely right that elected politicians decide on infrastructure priorities, but nobody benefits when decisions taken are subsequently reversed. The HS2 decision specifically was also as much about how the decision to cancel was taken. There have been other examples too of high-profile changes to, and cancellations of, infrastructure projects over the years, such as with onshore wind farms and carbon capture and storage, to name just two.

This doesn't just matter from a purely domestic point of view. It affects the UK's productivity, economic performance, and reputation internationally, in terms of its attractiveness and competitiveness for securing inward investment by private capital in UK infrastructure in an increasingly globally competitive investment market.

For decades, the UK was renowned for and enjoyed stable, sound, trustworthy and sensible government and competent stewardship of major infrastructure projects and innovation, but recent events – the handling of Brexit; management of the Covid pandemic; the economic fallout from the Liz Truss premiership – have, I think, impacted how others view the

UK in terms of trust, value, relevance, reliability, innovation and leadership.

## Long-term consequences

Decisions taken on infrastructure projects have long-term consequences. HS2 has been in the making since 2009/10 – so in the case of phases 2a and 2b, that is 13 years of work undone at a stroke. This example demonstrates that, in the UK, it is taking a decade at least for major projects to be delivered – a problem in itself – and in this case, the 'Network North' proposals that are to be taken forward instead of HS2 phases 2a and 2b represent another return to the drawing board, with the previously published Integrated Rail Plan another casualty of the recent change of direction.

The challenges ahead for the UK are extremely daunting, much more so than I can ever remember – from the massive decarbonisation challenge, bringing the need to improve resilience to climate change and improve natural capital, to chronic shortages of affordable and resilient housing and a real problem with our depleted environment



  
**Pinsent Masons**

Pinsent Masons partner Robbie Owen leads the firm's infrastructure planning and government affairs business. He advises on UK infrastructure and economic development policies, programmes and projects from a planning, environmental and administrative law perspective. This includes advising on policy formulation, enabling legislation, consenting and delivery.

overall. Technology in energy solutions is fast changing too. In particular, this will require a great grid upgrade – the greatest overhaul of the electricity transmission network in Britain for decades, a big increase in solar and offshore wind, and delivery of some 18 or so major new water resources projects – new reservoirs and water transfer schemes. In addition, the post-HS2 Network North command paper contemplates very significant investment across our transport networks.

There has been some progress in recent years that can be built upon. The National Infrastructure Commission, established in 2015 by George Osborne, has done some seriously good work, most recently its second five-yearly National Infrastructure Assessment and, in my work world, the April 2023 planning study. There has also been progress by government with planning reform following the national infrastructure strategy of 2020, as seen most recently in the autumn statement documents published last month. However, this is not enough to allow the UK to meet the daunting challenges it now faces.

For its part, Labour talks of bulldozing projects through, but even if that were to happen, it would not be a substitute for a strategic, structured, and disciplined approach to planning and delivery of infrastructure for the long term.

### Five-point plan for change

So, what should this structural change look like? I think the change needed is relatively straightforward – here's my five-point plan:

1. The National Infrastructure Commission should be created as a statutory body, answerable to parliament rather than to ministers. This was always the intention, coming out of Sir John Armitt's infrastructure review in 2013, but was not carried through when the NIC was created as a non-statutory body in 2015
2. The UK's economic regulators – the CMA, Ofgem,

Ofwat, etc – should be answerable to parliament rather than to ministers

3. the NIC should continue to be required to prepare a National Infrastructure Assessment every five years, taking a 30-year view of the UK's infrastructure needs, but also a longer term 100-year view as well, as other countries do
4. government should then be obliged by law to respond, within a year of each National Infrastructure Assessment, with a five-yearly national infrastructure strategy. The strategy would be approved by parliament via legislation and set out the projects required, as well as related funding arrangements and delivery programmes
5. the national infrastructure strategy would then be reflected in revised national policy statements, to perform the role of guiding decision-making on planning and consenting for the individual projects within the strategy.

All of this would be 'concreted in' by legislation. While it would not be impossible to change, it would be harder to alter speedily in response to shorter term political drivers. The government of the day would, as is entirely right and appropriate, be in the driving seat with each five-yearly strategy, but its feet would, and should, then be held to the fire to deliver, unless good reasons arise subsequently which require a change to the strategy approved by parliament.

I do not consider that my proposals for change are radical – and they would be reasonably straightforward to implement. They would impose some much-needed discipline and commitment to deliver. The alternative is that the UK carries on as it is, with no long-term strategic plans anyone can rely on. The UK faces a choice now – does it carry on muddling through or take steps to ensure long-term planning for the nation's fast-changing infrastructure needs and embed those in environmental and technological investment?

# Services & Ancillary Products Members



If you're looking for a specialist service to support your scaffolding company, check out NASC's Services & Ancillary Products members below:

**360 Degrees Consultancy Ltd**  
Buxton SK17 6HX  
T: 07787 408544  
E: karl@360degreesconsultancy.co.uk  
www.360degreesconsultancy.co.uk

**A**  
**ADI Scaffold Products Ltd**  
Brierley Hill DY5 1TX  
T: 01384 483657 E: sales@scaffoldfixings.co.uk  
www.scaffoldfixings.co.uk  
**All Aspects Scaffolding Ltd T/A All Aspects Scaffolding Safety Services**  
Grays RM16 3HU  
T: 01375 893590  
E: info@allaspectscaffoldsafety.co.uk  
www.allaspectscaffolding.co.uk  
**Avontus Software Ltd**  
Ely CB7 4WH  
T: 03303 801 349  
E: sales@avontus.co.uk  
www.avontus.com

**B**  
**Beacon Group International Products Ltd T/A Leach's**  
Hereford HR2 6BQ  
T: 01432 346 800  
E: sales@leachs.com  
www.leachs.com  
**Brady Corporation Ltd T/A Scafftag**  
Sully CF64 5AB  
T: 01446 725300  
E: customer.services@scafftag.com  
www.scafftag.co.uk  
**BWS Clearmind Limited**  
Oldham OL3 5AY  
T: 07519 915 468  
E: bwsclearmind@gmail.com  
Bwsclearmind.co.uk

**C**  
**Cactus Security**  
Herne Bay CT6 9AS  
T: 01227 365 000  
E: info@cactussecurity.co.uk  
www.cactussecurity.co.uk  
**Carney Consultancy Ltd**  
North Shields NE30 1JE  
T: 01912 963 652  
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https://www.carneyconsultancy.co.uk/

**Citation Ltd**  
Wilmslow SK9 5AR  
T: 0345 844 1111  
E: hello@citation.co.uk  
www.citation.co.uk  
**Clarke Health and Safety Consultants Ltd**  
Liverpool L16 4PN  
T: 0151 722 8268  
E: markclarke207@btinternet.com  
www.clarkehealthandsafety.com  
**Computer and Design Services Ltd**  
T/A SMART Scaffolder  
Broadstone BH18 8AX  
T: 01202 603031  
E: sales@smartscaffolder.com  
www.smartscaffolder.com  
**Croner-i Ltd**  
London SE1 8NW  
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**E**  
**Easy Inspect Ltd**  
Epsom KT17 2JJ  
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Gravesend DA13 0QB  
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**Falconbridge Site Security Ltd**  
Nottingham NG16 5AZ  
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**Footprint WFM**  
Belfast BT9 7GQ  
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E: ciaran.boyd@footprintwfm.com  
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**G**  
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Horley RH6 8JZ  
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**Height Industries Ltd**  
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E: enquiries@heightindustries.co.uk  
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**Houlihan Safety Services Ltd**  
Hornchurch RM12 5BB  
T: 07930 606 665  
E: houlihanassociates@googlemail.com  
http://www.houlihansafetyservices.co.uk/

**Hydrajaws Ltd**  
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**iPhorms Ltd**  
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**J**  
**J Mac Safety Systems Ltd**  
Stockton-on-Tees TS18 2PJ  
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E: sales@jmacsafetysystems.co.uk  
www.jmacsafetysystems.co.uk  
**J S Safety Associates**  
Welling DA16 2EP  
T: 07792271308  
E: jsaoffice@gmail.com  
www.jsasafetyassociates.com

**K**  
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T: +49 1577 8497982  
E: info@kewazo.com  
www.kewazo.com/

# Services & Ancillary Products Members

(continued)

If you're looking for a specialist service to support your scaffolding company, check out NASC's Services & Ancillary Products members below:

## L

### Lakeside Industries Ltd T/A Alto Access Products

Redditch B98 7SE  
T: 01527 500 577  
E: sales@altoaccess.com  
www.altoaccess.com

### LDS Hire & Sales Ltd T/A G-Deck

Leicester LE2 5NG  
T: 0116 251 0352  
E: office@gdecking.com  
www.gdecking.com

## M

### McCarron Coates Ltd

Leeds LS27 0BZ  
T: 0113 298 3489  
E: luigi@mccarroncoates.com  
www.mccarroncoates.com

### MOR1X Business and Consultancy

London SW14 8HX  
T: 07555 800700  
E: des@mor1x.co.uk  
www.mor1x.co.uk

## N

### NexGen Insurance Solutions Ltd

East Malling ME19 6BJ  
T: 01732 496 000  
E: enquiries@nexgeninsurance.co.uk  
https://nexgeninsurance.co.uk/

### Nicholas James Health & Safety Solutions Ltd

Dartford DA1 2EN  
T: 01322 472995  
E: enquiries@nicholasjamessafety.com  
www.nicholasjamessafety.com

## O

### Osborn Scaffolding Services

East Sussex TN22 4LA  
T: 07935 748 683  
E: osbornscaffolding@gmail.com

## P

### Portman Finance Group

Northampton NN4 7SL  
T: 01604 761 276  
E: info@portmanassetfinance.co.uk  
www.portmanassetfinance.co.uk

## Q

### QSCL (Quintessence Safety Consultants Ltd)

Burnley BB12 6AQ  
T: 07432 032 443  
E: dave@quin-safe.co.uk  
www.quin-safe.co.uk

## S

### Safety & Access Ltd

Nottingham NG6 8WA  
T: 0115 979 4523  
E: safe@safetyaccess.co.uk  
www.safetyaccess.co.uk

### ScaffFloat

Penryn TR10 9LH  
T: 01326 702 260  
E: sales@scafffloat.co.uk  
www.scafffloat.co.uk/

### ScaffGap Ltd

Hornchurch RM12 5BB  
T: 07930 606665  
E: scaffgapltd@gmail.com  
www.scaffgap.co.uk

### Scaffmag

Grimsby DN31 3AT  
T: 01472 476 024  
E: sadmin@scaffmag.com  
www.scaffmag.com

### Scaffolding & Access Safety Consultants Ltd (SASC)

Seaview PO34 5JP  
T: 01983 613 666  
E: tony@sascsafety.co.uk  
www.sascsafety.co.uk

### SJB Safety Services Ltd

Antrim TN28 8SE  
T: 07902 011 622  
E: sjb.safetyservices@yahoo.com  
www.facebook.com/SJBSafetyservices/

### SP Group Global Ltd

Middlewich BT41 2SJ  
T: 0289 442 8611  
E: accounts@s-pgroup.com  
www.s-pgroup.com

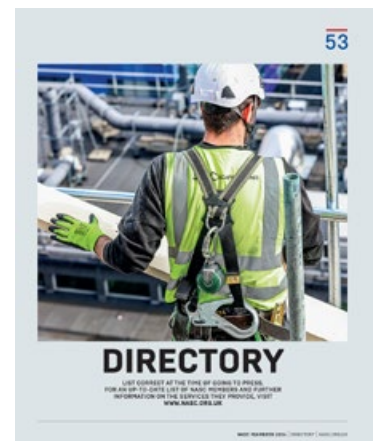
### SpanSet Ltd

Middlewich CW10 0HX  
T: 01606 737494  
E: customerservices@spanset.co.uk  
www.spanset.co.uk

### Stay Safe Scaffold Products

Wareham BH20 4SP  
T: 01929 552 625  
E: info@ntgroup.co.uk  
www.scaffoldgate.co.uk

# NASC



## StrikeSoft Ltd

Ware SG11 1PH  
T: 01920 823740 E: sales@strikesoft.co.uk  
www.strikesoft.co.uk

## T

### Training in Mind

Birmingham B43 6BP  
T: 07545 080 011  
E: traininginmind@outlook.com  
https://traininginmind.info

## V

### Vertex Training & Consultancy Ltd

Manchester M25 1PY  
T: 07920 557 234  
E: hello@vertexscaffoldingssafety.co.uk  
www.vertexscaffoldingssafety.co.uk

## W

### Winters Safety Services Ltd

Glasgow G68 0GL  
T: 01236 728290  
E: winters.safety@virgin.net  
www.winterssafetyservices.co.uk

### Worldwide Scaffold and Access Ltd

King's Lynn PE30 4DJ  
T: 01553 674 044  
E: tony@wwsa.co.uk  
www.wwsa.co.uk



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