Building Services Summit highlights importance of lifetime value of buildings

The 10-80-10 Summit took place on November 27th at the Barbican in London. Its focus was the long-term operational efficiency of buildings – and how it can be achieved.

Delegates heard speakers from the client side and experts from leading construction associations. It became very clear that clients are putting greater emphasis on how much it costs to operate their buildings – not simply the capital cost of new projects.

The first speaker of the day was Michael Dick, engineering manager of the Barbican. He spoke about the choices that engineers make about buildings: “We have to consider how our choices impact on buildings in the long-term.”

A number of speakers also pointed to the fact that buildings can appear to be designed and constructed to a high standard, such as BREEAM Excellent, but still disappoint in terms of long-term performance.

The role of the facilities manager was also a key topic of discussion. Geoff Prudence, head of CIBSE’s FM Group reminded delegates that operational efficiency is not only about energy: “It’s about maintenance, asset performance and prioritising work.”

And Deborah Rowland, head of property asset management for the Ministry of Justice, called on the construction industry to remember: “The FM has to run the building once you have left.”

The role of controls was also an important point made by a number of the speakers. All of the clients said that controls and BEMS were crucial for monitoring, measuring and targeting savings. They all used information from the BEMS to track progress and pinpoint areas for further improvement.

BCIA president Steve Harrison says: “The Summit was the BCIA’s first London-based conference and it was a great success. The message about working with other parts of the industry is one that we will take on board, and I hope that we can build on what has been achieved with B&ES, CSA and CIBSE.”
Legal & General confirms long-term value of sustainable and efficient buildings

Speaking at the 2014 Building Services Summit, Legal & General’s sustainability manager Debbie Hobbs, commented: “People ask me why we should bother with sustainability, and I reply why not?”

Legal & General manages over £14 billion of property, and the organisation is now very focused on a number of aspects of sustainability. In a recent report on sustainability and property value, Legal & General point to ‘a growing bank of international data proving the relationship between sustainability and performance.’

At the Summit, Hobbs pointed out that she is focused on understanding the operational performance of all the buildings in the organisation’s portfolio. This includes tracking energy from the meter level, to site level and up to fund level. She also pointed out that when purchasing new buildings, questions about operational efficiency are now high on the agenda. And Legal & General is not alone in this approach.

“Most of the commercial property market is now aware that an F or a G rating are no good, and you certainly don’t want one in your portfolio,” she commented.

She also highlighted the importance of good information from building controls and BEMS. This is not simply about energy data, but about understanding what is happening in a particular building and being able to take action.

“I don’t want simply to save energy, but to be able to fine tune the buildings,” she added.

With the increasing emphasis on long-term performance of buildings as assets, there is a growing emphasis on building energy management systems to provide the data that is required to build and execute energy efficiency strategies for businesses.

Sainsbury’s has 20x20 vision for its stores

Phil Osborn, head of energy for Sainsbury’s showed how the supermarket’s 20x20 sustainability plan is focusing the organisation on energy saving.

Speaking at the Building Services Summit, Osborn said that Sainsbury’s has strong ethical reasons for this strategy, but: “We don’t do anything that doesn’t make us money.”

He highlighted that since 2007, Sainsbury’s has made an absolute reduction in electricity use of 12%, which represents around £18 million per year at today’s energy prices.

Osborn pointed to a number of successful strategies that have achieved this huge saving. Sainsbury’s has a number of ‘Carbon Step-change’ stores in which it tests new techniques and technologies before applying them else where. Renewable sources of energy such as anaerobic digestion and photovoltaics have been used.

Energy savings have been found in the use of LED lighting, which has had a major impact on the energy use of some stores.

However, one of the most important drivers for saving energy has been good communication with store managers and staff. “We incentivise our store managers on their energy use. But we also know that we need to engage the engineering team and facilities managers too,” said Osborn

He added that bringing upper management onto the team was equally important, saying: “You need to learn what drives your CFO and to speak his or her language. Getting the board on board is very important.”

By focusing on the wider issue of sustainability, Sainsbury’s has managed to reduce its use of energy and other resources such as water. It has also saved substantial sums from the bottom line, and developed good communications with teams in-store.
Commissioning Specialists call for buildings that are operationally ready at handover

Glen Hawkins of Clear Construction spoke for the Commissioning Specialists Association (CSA) at the building services summit. He made a strong argument for better commissioning and handover of buildings.

Hawkins highlighted what many other speakers at the Summit said, that it is no longer simply a case of handing over a building on time and on cost, at and ‘acceptable’ building quality.

“We need buildings that are ready to perform the required functions and that offer high levels of performance over the long term,” he said.

He also pointed to research that shows properly commissioned buildings achieve between twice and five times the energy savings of buildings that are poorly commissioned – or not at all.

BCIA president Steve Harrison comments, “The BCIA membership can certainly back this point of view. Too often we are left with no time to commission the building controls and BEMS, and we are well aware that this does not enable us to hand over an optimal system to building managers and occupants.”

BCIA Awards 2015 – still time to enter

You still have time to enter the BCIA Awards. Entry forms are available on our dedicated website www.bcia-awards.co.uk. These forms mean that entering the Awards couldn’t be easier.

Our independent judging panel will be sitting down to make the final decisions soon, so get online and ensure you are in with a chance of winning in 2015. We have a range of categories, including those for products, projects, energy saving, training and outstanding individual performance.

The 2014 BCIA Awards were held last May, and were our biggest event yet with over 460 guests attending our gala dinner. We need your Awards entries to make this year’s event our best yet.

For all the information and full details on how to book a place at our amazing dinner, go to www.bcia-awards.co.uk today.
Our mission is to promote the application and use of building controls for energy efficient, comfortable and productive environments. The BCIA provides a unique forum for manufacturers and systems installers to discuss technical, training and legislative issues.

We work to educate specifiers and end-users about building controls and liaise with other industry associations, professional organisations and government to educate the wider market about designing, installing and using controls to maximise their benefits.

To find out more about joining the BCIA contact executive officer Karen Fletcher
karen@bcia.co.uk

Benefits of membership
• Access to our unique Market Information Service on the UK controls sector
• Discounted training costs
• Regular meetings for networking with peers
• Influence on developments in our industry through BCIA Working Groups