

CEO Report



I try and make a point of reading a past Council Report as often as possible to ensure that, as we move forward with the opportunities and developments that CIBSE is striving for, we remember our past and our heritage, and learn from previous successes and failures. I took a look at the minutes from February 2017, where there was a note that: “(The CEO Report...) was the longest ever, reflecting the range and diversity of CIBSE activities.” And of course, nothing has changed since then, with the amount of activity we are now seeing at least twice that of only half a decade ago. I spent this morning reading through our Annual Report as it is finalised for publication, and even I was amazed by the sheer breadth of things CIBSE, its members, its volunteers and its staff are doing.

Let me start this Report by briefly touching on the achievements of last year. 2022 was an outstanding year for CIBSE. Our membership numbers have remained high (bucking the trend that the other Professional Engineering Institutions are seeing), our guidance output has exceeded previous years, and we have delivered the best financial year in CIBSE history. This has, in turn, allowed us to invest more in engagement, technical guidance, and increasing the impact and role of the building services engineer. Our Institution has also evolved and grown over the past few years, and you are now a part of a truly international community, with 29% of CIBSE’s members sitting outside of the UK.

It is only right to acknowledge that 2022 also had its challenges. Rising costs, the ‘Great Resignation’, economic uncertainty and the ongoing knock-on from the pandemic have all had an impact. Your achievements, despite the challenges, demonstrate CIBSE’s resilience in adapting to change whilst retaining our ongoing position as one of the leading professional engineering institutions.

2023 promises to be no less challenging and exciting. As you read through this report, you will find that the membership activities, the guidance and the knowledge provision is as high, if not higher, than ever. CIBSE is an institution that never stands still, and 2023 will reflect that even more.

Here at CIBSE Head Office, we have a number of significant projects to deliver on in 2023. Not least, as you are all aware, our plans to relocate from Balham to a more central London location and thank you to all at the October Council Meeting who contributed to the debate and discussion with such energy and positivity. Standing in front of you at that meeting and asking, 'do any of you think we should NOT be moving', followed by a deafening silence from our Council, was proof enough that our time has come to move on. Balham will always be a part of our story but it is time to find somewhere that reflects the modern, international organisation we have become. The Premise Project will be a key discussion item at the 23rd February Council Meeting so please come prepared to discuss and contribute.

Last year's launch of CIBSE's refreshed and revitalised website was welcomed unanimously by everyone. Clean, fresh, accessible and far more user friendly. But it is only the first step, as the reality is that a website project never ends – it just evolves. In the same vein, we have started a Brand Refresh Project. The first stage is exploring if we modernise the CIBSE logo, looking at a strap line and capturing how we describe CIBSE in 20, 50 or 200 words. As always, thank you to members of the Council who gave their input during the October 2022 breakout sessions.

With the implications of the Building Safety Act being a key issue for our members, our Technical and Membership teams and CIBSE volunteers have worked closely with the Engineering Council to develop the necessary guidance and competence framework for higher-risk buildings and create a framework for the contextualised register for those working on higher-risk buildings. CIBSE will send an application to licence members under the contextualised register.

New knowledge is coming thick and fast, and in the last quarter of 2022 CIBSE delivered two new TM65 Embodied Carbon publications, one for international application and a calculator for ANZ and from the SLL, Lighting Guide for Offices LG7 and an updated SLL Code for Lighting.

CIBSE works with eight leading industry organisations to deliver the Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard (NZCBS) with Dr Julie Godefroy as CIBSE's lead on the project. The group is working toward taking the standard to government as an industry solution to the problem of recognising net zero buildings providing a solution. This is a significant amount of work, and CIBSE is proud to have several members involved in the project, including Clara Bengal George, MCIBSE, Elementa, Chair of the Technical Steering Group and Katie Clemence-Jackson, MCIBSE, QUODA, Chair CIBSE Technology Committee. At the end of 2023, CIBSE will introduce mandatory CPD to support the implementation of the building safety act and sustainability to deliver the commitment in the CIBSE Climate Action Plan.

I was delighted to be invited to the first meeting of the reignited CIBSE Fellows Network before Christmas. The Network has hit the ground running with the launch of CIBSE Mentoring. This is an online platform where members can be matched with a mentor/mentee based on their expertise and skills. It is straightforward and self-managed via the CIBSE website, where members will have control of who they'd like to meet and how often.

It is free for all members, with the initial launch targeted to our Fellows and MCIBSEs, to develop a pool of mentors before a full launch in March to the rest of the membership. For more information and to access the portal, visit www.cibse.org/mentoring (or under the 'Get Involved' heading on the website).

I continue to be amazed and proud of CIBSE people and the impact it is having, and I see from every part of our wide community; the success of the SFE Awards, the launch of the new Heritage Refurbishment sub-group, and the Building Simulation and Digital Engineering awards to name but a few. All are focused on growing and raising the profile of best practices in their areas.

For many of you, inspiring the next generation (indeed theme of our President, Kevin Mitchell) is a key challenge and none more so with regards to grassroots engagement with primary school children. I am excited about the work the Membership Department is doing on a classroom-based activity for children between ages 9-11 to engage and introduce them to the world of the building service engineer. The work is being supported by the Graham Manly bequest and the CIBSE Patrons.

The Nominations for CIBSE medals are now open and I would ask all of you to look at those within your networks who deserve recognition for the hard work that they have put in for CIBSE. I talked earlier about the successes we had last year, and these would not have been achieved without the exceptional input of our many volunteers. Please take a look at the link here to refresh yourselves on the criteria. We are proud of our outstanding volunteer,s and CIBSE welcomes the chance to recognise and thank them.

2022 also saw some changes in key staff at CIBSE Head Office. We said a fond farewell in September to Laura Webb, our Membership Director, who moved to RIBA as their Executive Director for Membership. But I am delighted that Richard Goldsbrough joined us at the beginning of January to take over the leadership of our Membership, Standards and Networks department. Richard comes from IMarEST where he led their membership team and so had 'engineering institution DNA' running through his veins. Before that, he was at CIPD where he was instrumental in supporting and delivering on a substantial membership growth journey. He is already attending as many meetings as is humanly possible and hoping to get around to everyone in time. Bdo please feel free to get in contact with him at rgoldsbrough@cibse.org.

After 30 years of CIBSE service, Stuart Brown retired early in 2022 as our Deputy Chief Executive and Company Secretary. His role has been taken over by Desiree Blamey (dblamey@cibse.org) who is known to many of you through her role as CIBSE's Finance Director over the last 7 years. In her new role as Director of Finance and Operations, she will oversee many oentral functions that keep the CIBSE wheels turning behind the scenes. She is supported by Rowan Crowley (rcrowley@cibse.org) who is our Head of Corporate Governance and is responsible for Board, Council, Nominations and Governance. Again, some of you may already know Rowan, as he was Managing Director of CIBSE Services for many years before retiring in 2021. The lure of CIBSE was too great for him though, and we are delighted to welcome him home.

We also said a fond farewell to Janet Wigglesworth who was the welcoming face of CIBSE for 33 years. We were delighted to hear that Jan was awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year's Honours List for her services to CIBSE and the sector. Mickayla Senior (mseior@cibse.org) is now in that role and is equally as welcoming.

We have also started the recruiting for a new Technical Director. So many of you have said to me how much you value Hywel Davies and his encyclopaedic input but that you wished you could have more time with him. I am delighted therefore that we have promoted Hywel to the role of Chief Technical Officer, where he will take more of an outward facing role, leading on increased support for our networks and ensuring our Voice gets heard. In the absence of being able to deliver effective cloning, we have started the recruitment for a new Technical Director to join the team, and I look forward to keeping you updated on how that is developing over the coming months.

Finally, I want to finish with a most excellent quote from the 1925 Council Meeting minutes. The then President, Mr Alcwyn A. Jones stated that “an engineer must of necessity be always learning, for when (he) discontinues (his) education (he) ceases to be an engineer”. All you have to do is modernise the gender references, and you have a statement as true today as it was nearly 100 years ago.

I look forward to seeing many of you online (NB. It is a virtual meeting and not at Balham) at our next Council Meeting on 23rd February and, as always, thank you for your continued support and hunger for CIBSE to be the best it can.

Best

Ruth

Ruth Carter
CIBSE Chief Executive Officer