

INNOVATION

LNER AND TREEVA PUT TURBINES NEXT TO THE TRACK ([see story here](#))

LNER and clean energy infrastructure experts **Treeva** are pioneering a UK rail first, capturing energy from turbulent airflow and turning it into clean, renewable energy. As part of a proof-of-concept initiative, three wind turbines have been safely and successfully installed alongside the East Coast Main Line at Hitachi Rail's Craighentenny depot. Standing around six feet tall and manufactured using upcycled materials, the turbines are the first of their kind to be installed and operated next to a UK main line railway. The turbines require no grid connection and are designed to be easily deployed on unused land alongside railway tracks, capturing energy generated by passing trains. The clean energy generated will be harnessed, measured, and used to power a range of devices, enabling a better understanding of how this groundbreaking technology could be rolled out across Britain's rail network. C

INNOVATIVE SEVERN TUNNEL UPGRADE TO TRANSFORM KEY RAIL LINK ([see story here](#))

This vital project will see **Network Rail**, and contractors **ARQ**, complete the transformation of the Severn Tunnel's overhead power system, designed specifically to withstand the tunnel's harsh, corrosive environment – making it more resilient, reducing the frequency of maintenance, and helping to minimise disruption. Since electrification, the overhead power system has been prone to corrosion and electrical wear, leading to more frequent maintenance. To address this, Network Rail's Wales and Borders team has developed and successfully trialled an innovative new system. It uses a single 7km copper contact wire supported at regular intervals by modified bridge arms, to eliminate previous corrosion issues and improve performance.

TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY HELPING LNER AND NETWORK RAIL RUN AN ON-TIME RAILWAY ([see story here](#))

LNER and **Network Rail** have partnered up to install equipment across the LNER Azuma and InterCity 225 fleets which monitors the condition of the East Coast Main Line and beyond. Pantograph Damage Assessment System (PANDAS) and Automated Intelligent Video Review (AIVR) constantly assess overhead line equipment (OLE) and track, reports any potential damage, and helps engineers proactively fix any issues before they can lead to severe disruption, which can cost the taxpayer millions of pounds each year and delay customers for hours. The equipment is fitted on the roof of a train, including part of it on the pantograph, and uses artificial intelligence and machine learning to continuously analyse pantograph and overhead line interactions, providing accurate, up to date information to Network Rail engineers.

HUMANOID ROBOT GOES TO WORK ON TILBURY DOUGLAS SITE ([see story here](#))

Tilbury Douglas said it has become the first tier one contractor to deploy a humanoid robot on a live construction site. The robot, named Douglas, has been introduced to support and assist site teams by undertaking administrative data-collection tasks. The £15,000 robot is capable of autonomously navigating construction site to capture 360-degree imagery and detailed progress reports to support health and safety monitoring and reporting processes. The initiative is expected to save an average of 40 hours per month.

RAILWAY SETS COURSE FOR AI ON JOURNEY TO GREAT BRITISH RAILWAYS ([see story here](#))

Britain's railway is set to further harness artificial intelligence to improve reliability, efficiency and passenger experience, as the sector launches its first-ever joint AI action plan. More than 200 rail leaders and technology experts recently gathered in London to mark the milestone and align on a coordinated approach to AI adoption across the network. To guide implementation, the *Artificial Intelligence in Rail Action Plan* has been developed following extensive cross-sector collaboration led by **GBRX** — the strategic technology body for Britain's railway — establishing a more joined-up way of working as the sector moves towards Great British Railways. The plan focuses on overcoming long-standing barriers around data, governance and skills, moving the sector beyond isolated pilots to a coordinated, railway-wide approach enabled by rail reform.

CAMERAMATICS ADDS ASSET TRACKING ([see story here](#))

Fleet intelligence platform **CameraMatics** has added trackers for assets, alongside its existing offering for vehicles. The system aims to enable organisations to track and locate almost any item across the business. The discreet device allows users to monitor plant and machinery, pallets, trailers, and containers independently of the vehicle. This provides clear visibility into how equipment is moving and being used across operations.

NATIONAL GRID GETS DYNAMIC ([see story here](#))

National Grid will move ahead with adding dynamic line rating to 585km of transmission lines, after trialling the technology with LineVision. Dynamic line rating, or DLR, uses sensors and data analysis to continually monitor transmission lines. This avoids the need to set conservative, static values to line capacity, increasing power carrying capacity by 8% on average. This reduces the need for constraint payments, where a generator is paid to stop generating to avoid overloading the electricity network.

FASTER DRYWALL PLANNING WITH AI ([see story here](#))

The **University of Wolverhampton** has launched knowledge transfer partnership (KTP) with **Drywall Steel Sections** to speed the design and costing of steel frame and drywall systems using AI. The KTP will look at how light gauge steel framing and drywall is designed and costed. Using manual techniques, the team says, can take several weeks; work that is not paid for if a contract is not won. The AI-powered digital tools being developed aim to reduce the time needed to hours, improve accuracy, and cut down on wasted work.

PIPCALL ASSESSMENT SERVICE TURNS RAIL SAFETY CALLS INTO ACTIONABLE INSIGHT ([see story here](#))

PiPcall has launched SCART (Secure Communication Assessment on the Rail Track), a new platform designed to target the rail industry's pressing safety communications challenge. From 6th June **Network Rail** mandates call recording for all PICOPs (Person in Charge of Possession), ESs (Electrical Supervisor), COSSs (Controller of Site Safety), and PCs (Protection Controller). However, a single safety-critical call can take up to 30 minutes for an experienced assessor to review properly. Multiplied across hours of recordings every week, even well-resourced teams quickly reach breaking point, often archiving calls they are no longer able to meaningfully review – technically compliant, but operationally blind. SCART is designed to change that. The platform automatically analyses every recorded call using a combination of rule-based compliance checks aligned to NR/L2/OPS/301 and NR/L3/OPS/301 standards, alongside AI-powered transcription. Each call is assessed across five core areas: Identification, Phraseology, Repeat-Back, Clarity, and Closing. The system understands the differences between operational roles, flags missing repeat-backs as critical safety issues, and identifies deviations in phonetic and safety-critical language. In this way, it goes well beyond compliance checking and provides insight into the kind of model communication that prevents incidents from happening.

EQUIPMENT

NIXON HIRE LAUNCHES ENERGY USE TOOL ([see story here](#))

Nixon Hire, a supplier of site cabins and solar panels, has launched a new browser-based portal to allow clients to track energy use, carbon impact, and cost. The portal (Pulse) targets uses of off-grid renewable energy. It will allow customers to view equipment and renewable energy assets on hire by site, access live diagnostic insights and identify energy generation issues. They will be able to track financial savings, fuel savings and carbon reductions, and compare site efficiency and performance across multiple locations and time periods.

TILHILL AUTOMATES TREE PLANTING ([see story here](#))

Tilhill Forestry has trialled the use of an automated tree planting machine, to speed up woodland restocking and creation. The trial focuses on the PlantMax automated planting system, designed by Swedish company **Plantma Forestry**. Assessments will help determine its potential role in restocking and woodland creation operations, with early results demonstrating the machine's ability to plant consistently well on a number of different sites at viable commercial rates.

VOLVO ELECTRIC HAULERS START SERIAL PRODUCTION ([see story here](#))

Volvo Construction Equipment has started serial production of its A30 Electric and A40 Electric articulated haulers. Some of the first units will arrive in the UK shortly. The move to serial production is a world first for electric haulers of this size, the company says, and marks a major milestone for the mining and quarrying sector. The haulers, with 29t and 39t payloads, were first shown at Bauma in 2025. Depending on application, the machines can offer up to six hours of operation on a single charge.

YANMAR LAUNCHES MINI EXCAVATOR ([see story here](#))

Yanmar has launched the SV10, a new compact excavator in the below 2t class, configurable to a width of 740mm, small enough for standard doorways, targeting jobs in construction and urban infrastructure where space is limited but performance essential. The SV10 has a variable width undercarriage. Retracted, it can manoeuvre through doorways and in constricted sites; at its full 990mm, more stability is available when needed. It has a rear swing radius of 540mm.

VOLVO LAUNCHES NEW ELECTRIC TRUCKS ([see story here](#))

Volvo has launched new electric trucks for deliveries and on-road works - the next generation FH, FM and FMX Electrics feature a new drive train for more torque. New driveline technology, the e-axle, makes room for more batteries, enabling increased range, meeting the new Megawatt Charging System (MCS) standard - its batteries can be charged from 20% to 80% in around 50 minutes. For customers looking to add machinery like concrete mixers, hook lifts or cranes, the range is fitted with a new dual-motor drivetrain with a purpose-built gearbox using eight gears to maximise electric torque, achieving a power output of 540kW (731hp). An integrated gearbox power take off allows for mounted machinery to be used while driving, and without the need for extra motors or other add-ons.

ELECTRIC RETROFIT FOR CONCRETE MIXER DRUMS ([see story here](#))

Utranazz has launched an electric retrofit solution for concrete truck mixer drums, Ultradrive, powering the drum while the truck engine is turned off, designed to replace the conventional upper-structure drive system on a concrete truck mixer, helping operators tackle challenges such as high idle times, excessive fuel consumption, engine wear, emissions and on-site noise. By reducing reliance on the truck engine to power the mixer drum, the system promotes a cleaner, quieter and more energy-efficient job-site, with energy consumption reductions of up to 70%.

SUNBELT TO OFFER HYDROGEN POWER UNITS ([see story here](#))

Sunbelt will offer GeoPura green hydrogen power units for rental across the UK. The GeoPura HPU functions as a self-charging battery powered by hydrogen, converting green hydrogen into electricity through a fuel cell process. The only outputs are water and heat, delivering silent, zero-emission power. The system provides continuous, reliable power and automatically recharges its integrated battery, maintaining efficiency across variable loads. They replace diesel generators for temporary and off-grid power or operate alongside existing renewable and grid infrastructure as supplementary power, strengthening resilience and supporting wider electrification goals.

FLUKE LAUNCHES CABLE SPOTTER ([see story here](#))

Fluke has launched a new underground utilities locator, the SmartTrace 2082 series, which provides precise information on the location, depth, and path of underground cables and pipes, enabling workers to identify unknown assets and prevent damage before excavation. Designed for accurate tracing and fault detection, SmartTrace pinpoints issues such as ground

faults, sheath faults, and coating defects on pipelines or cables in direct contact with the ground. By locating where metallic conductors touch earth ground faults or leakage currents occur (such as from corrosion or damaged joints) the system enhances safety, efficiency, and troubleshooting accuracy in the field.

JCB LAUNCHES NEW FINANCE OFFER ([see story here](#))

JCB has launched a new way to finance the purchase of its machines, aiming to make them easier to buy for smaller businesses. JCB FlexiBuy is a business contract purchase (BCP) facility that offers low initial outlay, affordable monthly payments and flexible end-of-term options, helping customers invest in new equipment while managing cashflow. The new option is available across JCB's mini excavator range from 1.5t to five tonnes, including the 19C-1E electric excavator.

JLG ADDS BOARD AND PIPE CARRYING ACCESSORY ([see story here](#))

JLG has launched a new board and pipe carrying accessory for models in its low level access equipment range, that can be fitted to the Power Tower and Power Tower Duo elevating electric platforms. It features a small ledge that can support plasterboard sheets, with a maximum weight capacity of 75kg. A rack along the handrail can carry lengths of material such as pipe, threaded rod or strut, weighing up to 45kg.

A SMALL MOLE FOR A NARROW HOLE ([see story here](#))

Tracto is launching an extra short version of its Grundomat 45 mole, designed for trenchless pipe laying, in the UK, for applications where space for entry and exit pits is limited. It measures just 800mm long, reducing digging needed when preparing for pipe installation and cutting remediation and reinstatement costs. It weighs 8kg, making handling easier, but still delivers 580 impacts a minute. It is available in high-strength steel or hardened alloy steel.

SCHNEIDER BRINGS 720KW CHARGING TO UK ([see story here](#))

Schneider Electric is launching its StarCharge Fast 720 charger in the UK, targeting fleets and heavy duty transport. The EV charger delivers up to 720kW of power and can charge up to 12 vehicles simultaneously. It is designed for commercial and industrial sites as well as fleet operators. The charger boasts 97% efficiency, and features dynamic load management to ensure optimal charging for diverse vehicle types.

LEGUAN LAUNCHES ELECTRIC SPIDER LIFTS ([see story here](#))

Leguan has announced the global launch of a new electric option for its range of all terrain spider lifts, powered by the Finnish manufacturer's in-house produced Avant Power OptiTemp battery. This features a unique liquid-immersion technology that keeps the battery pack operating at an optimal temperature at all times, delivering exceptional safety and consistent performance in all conditions.

UPGRADE FOR SHEETMASTER ([see story here](#))

Groundforce Shorco has upgraded its SheetMaster tool to prevent sheet drops. It has been trialled by JN Bentley, Seymour Construction, United Infrastructure and J Murphy & Sons. SheetMaster 2.0 has a safe working load of 10t, and features an innovative ratchet release mechanism to avoid accidental sheet release. It is a multi-function sheet handling and installation attachment that replaces multiple regularly-used trench sheet handling tools on site.

LIEBHERR EXTENDS DIGITAL SERVICES ([see story here](#))

Liebherr has extended its MyLiebherr platform for earthmoving and material handling machines, offering performance data and maintenance support. MyLiebherr Maintenance provides support to workshop managers to minimise unplanned machine downtime and reduce the time required for problem identification, assessment and resolution. A status overview clearly lists all the fleet operator's machines and attachments. A traffic light system records the machine's status, allowing machines requiring immediate action to be identified at a glance. MyLiebherr Performance can be used to identify inefficient machine operations, reduce idle time and thereby save fuel, as well as to analyse weighing data.

HAULOTTE & BUILDER ASSIST TO PUT ROBOTS ON MEWPS ([see story here](#))

Lifting manufacturer Haulotte has partnered with Builder Assist to add a robotic arm to MEWPs, to perform complex construction tasks. The partners are currently testing the arm fitted on several Haulotte mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) in real jobsite conditions. The focus always in robotics is on jobs that are dangerous, dirty or dull: in this case, overhead drilling, along with painting and coating of facades. The pilot fleet is being used to assess market interest and to measure the operational value of combining robots and MEWPs.

AI HELPS FIND LIEBHERR PARTS ([see story here](#))

Liebherr Nenzing, the manufacturer of deep foundation machines, duty cycle and crawler cranes, has launched a new digital tool using AI to identify parts and prepare for maintenance. The app combines AI-powered part recognition with a listing of due maintenance intervals, helping ensure customers can order the right parts fast when they are needed. Users can identify components via photo recognition, text search, QR code, entering an item number or a combination of all. This functionality allows immediate identification even when nameplates become damaged or unreadable through time. Results can be cross-checked using the official Liebherr parts catalogue, giving increased reassurance of the correct parts.

MATERIALS/USES/METHODS

COLD BITUMEN FOR NATIONAL HIGHWAYS ([see story here](#))

Roadways has delivered cold bitumen emulsion-based asphalt as a low carbon replacement for traditional materials on a National Highways project. The material was supplied as like-for-like replacement, avoiding departures from specification on the A26 Beddington and A259 Winchelsea. By positioning it as a like-for-like replacement under Clause 948 of the Specification for Highways Works, rather than as an experimental material, Roadways was able to avoid a lengthy programme of trials. This is a first for the strategic road network managed by National Highways, and promises to speed

adoption of low carbon replacement materials. The cold binder is produced using 100% recycled aggregate, eliminating virgin materials in the layer where used.

LOW CARBON CONCRETE FIRST FOR MURPHY ([see story here](#))

Murphy has poured low carbon concrete using limestone filler and supplementary cementitious materials (SCM), for the first time in permanent works, at Shipley Depot, part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade. The concrete, Ecocem ACT, replaces clinker with other materials. Clinker production emits CO₂ both from the large amounts of fossil fuel used to heat kilns, and from the chemical process itself. Ecocem's ACT replaces this material with SCMs and limestone filler, cutting its overall carbon impact.

PREFAB PLUMBING SPEEDS LEEDS TOWER ([see story here](#))

Briggs Forrester Living selected prefabricated drainage and water supply products from **Polypipe Building Services**, cutting installation times on the Leeds Sky Gardens apartment block. The use of prefabrication dramatically improved project efficiency, reducing the installation of drainage risers from an average of 73 hours to only nine hours. A modular plantroom was assembled from 13 prefabricated sections off-site and connected with just ten electrofusion couplings, a method that reduced on-site assembly operations by 93.5%. The units were craned directly from delivery vehicles to each floor of the building, streamlining logistics and improving safety on a site with limited space and storage.

COSTAIN OPTS FOR 3D PRINTED CONCRETE ON TEESIDE JOB ([see story here](#))

Costain has become the latest contractor to deploy 3D printed, low-carbon concrete on a major UK infrastructure scheme as the technology starts to break into the mainstream. The firm and civils partner **A E Yates** have teamed up with Finnish specialist **Hyperion Robotics** to deliver 90 high-strength concrete pipe support bases for a flagship carbon capture project on Teesside. The components – known as sleepers – will support 1.3km of pipeline forming part of the East Coast Cluster carbon capture network. Hyperion's robotic 3D printing process eliminates the need for traditional formwork while producing precise, repeatable units offsite. Compared with conventional precast, the approach cuts concrete and steel use by 40% and reduces embodied carbon by up to 50%.

HEIDELBERG LAYS SUSTAINABLE ASPHALT AT EUROTUNNEL ([see story here](#))

Heidelberg Materials UK has resurfaced the Kent entrance to the Eurotunnel service tunnel, using a carbon-reducing asphalt. The company recommended the use of its Tufflex asphalt with CarbonLock bio-binder containing a CleanAir additive and produced using its Era 140 warm mix process to provide a complete sustainable solution. This cut carbon emissions by more than a quarter, compared to Eurotunnel's original SMA specification.

BACHY AND KILNBRIDGE TEAM UP FOR GROUND-TO-FRAME OFFER ([see story here](#))

Foundations specialist **Bachy Soletanche** has teamed up with concrete contractor **Kilnbridge** to launch a new specialist venture targeting complex city construction jobs. **UrbanCore** will offer clients a single integrated package covering demolition, dismantling, material reuse, foundations, basements, reinforced concrete and steel frames. The new venture has been set up to cut risk on tight city schemes where the split between groundworks, substructure and structural packages can cause delays and cost uncertainty, and will focus on commercial developments and basement-led schemes in dense urban locations. The approach will simplify procurement and give clients clearer accountability from early design through to delivery.

MGF PLANS NEW FACILITY ([see story here](#))

Excavation, structural support and lifting solutions specialist **MGF** is investing in a new production facility in Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, aiming for a 300% increase in its manufacturing capacity. The investment will be accompanied by the adoption of modern manufacturing techniques, improved efficiencies and enhanced quality control processes. Sustainability has also been a key consideration, with the new facility designed to deliver long-term environmental benefits through smarter use of space and energy-efficient operations.

HS2 TUNNEL CROSS-PASSAGE DOORS ([see story here](#))

Booth Industries has completed the first of 300 safety-critical cross-passage doors for the HS2 project at a new factory in Bolton, supporting more than 130 jobs in the north-west. The purpose-built 600m² facility sits alongside the company's main factory, increasing production capacity while enabling greater automation to support volume manufacturing. The cross-passage doors will play a crucial role in the safe and reliable operation of the railway by separating northbound and southbound tunnels and giving access in the event of an emergency. The doors must be engineered to the highest standards to withstand significant pressure changes caused by trains passing at high-speed, as well as extreme heat in the unlikely event of fire within the tunnel.

HEIDELBERG & KENSON DELIVER LOW CARBON ROAD ([see story here](#))

Heidelberg Materials UK has worked with **Kenson Highways** to deliver a lower carbon residential road in the London Borough of Redbridge, using its evoZero cement. evoZero cement was used in Redbridge to form the kerb, edging haunching, and in the sub-base of the footway. Heidelberg also supplied the asphalt to resurface the carriageway and footway. The binder course material incorporated 25 per cent reclaimed asphalt (RA) as well as 6.5 per cent ACLA, a negative carbon product, at the request of the client. The asphalt surface course contained Heidelberg CarbonLock bio-binder and was produced using its Era 140 warm mix process. The CarbonLock binder contains biogenic materials that absorb and store CO₂ from the atmosphere during their life. This CO₂ is permanently 'locked' into the asphalt, even when it is recycled at the end of its life, reducing the carbon footprint of the asphalt.

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

TILBURY HYDROGEN TO FUEL LTC CONSTRUCTION ([see story here](#))

GeoPura is partnering with **Forth Ports'** Port of Tilbury, to develop a green hydrogen facility. The 1MW low carbon plant will fuel port operations, and construction work on the Lower Thames Crossing, alongside other heavy industry uses. The project was enabled by £2m of **Thames Freeport** seed capital, and aims to establish the Essex port as a testbed for low-carbon fuel use in heavy industry.

LAING O'ROURKE GETS CARBON CERTIFIED ([see story here](#))

Laing O'Rourke has had its processes certified by the BSI under PAS 2080:2023, Carbon management in buildings and infrastructure. The specification was updated in 2023 to strengthen focus and collaboration across the full built environment with the inclusion of 'buildings' into its scope.

SAINT-GOBAIN GOES ELECTRIC ([see story here](#))

Saint-Gobain has invested in six Volvo electric HGVs in partnership with **XPO Logistics**, alongside charging infrastructure from **Gridserve**. The eHGVs will be used in a five year operational trial, based out of Saint-Gobain's Midlands logistics hub. Gridserve will supply four 350KW chargers at the hub, able to charge the e-HGVs to 80% in just 90 minutes and fully charge them in under two hours.

NETWORK RAIL DEAL TO RUN DEPOTS, OFFICES AND STATIONS FROM WIND POWER ([see story here](#))

Network Rail has taken another major step towards powering all its offices, depots and managed stations with renewable electricity after signing a deal with leading renewable energy company **RWE** to supply around 65 per cent of its non-traction electricity from one of its offshore wind farms. The Corporate Power Purchase Agreement (CoPPA), Network Rail's second within a year, will deliver 300 GWh of renewable electricity annually over five years. Power will be supplied from RWE's Gwynt y Môr Offshore Wind Farm, off the coast of North Wales, which will help Network Rail reduce its carbon emissions by around 168,000 tonnes of CO₂e – the equivalent of planting 6.5 million trees.

MUKAWAY PARTNERS WITH MV KELLY ([see story here](#))

Digital material management platform **MukAway** has secured a partnership with groundworks firm **MV Kelly**, expanding its network as it prepares to launch business-to-business trade in reusable materials. MukAway aims to connect contractors, housebuilders, civil engineering, main contractors, recycle yards and wash plant businesses to enable the reuse and redistribution of construction materials.

RICS ESTABLISHES GLOBAL WHOLE-LIFE CARBON COLLABORATION ([see story here](#))

RICS has established a new collaboration to harmonise how whole-life carbon emissions are measured across the global built environment. CLEAR, the *Coalition for Life Cycle Emissions Alignment and Reporting*, launched recently at the Sustainable Buildings and Construction Summit. Recognising the impact of the built environment on carbon emissions, both during construction and in operation, the collaboration seeks to replace inconsistent methodologies that make it difficult to compare results, benchmark performance, and make informed decisions.

OS INTRODUCES BNG MAPPING ([see story here](#))

Ordnance Survey has created a new tool to map habitats, supporting developers in reaching targets for a 10% uplift in biodiversity. OS Enhanced Land Cover (ELC) Beta is a foundational dataset combining topography and land cover from the OS National Geographic Database, OS aerial imagery and OS terrain 5 with a range of third-party open habitat data. This includes information from Natural England's Living England, the Rural Payments Agency's Crop Map of England and UKHab's classification system. UKHab is the UK standard classification for referring to habitats and underpins the statutory biodiversity metric which developers must use. The product can be used to conduct BNG assessments, both for early workflow desktop analysis and for use by ecologists in the field. Developers, landowners, and ecologists can also better understand the composition of their land cover at scale before conducting more detailed surveys.

SUFFOLK WETLANDS RESTORED TO BOOST BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE ([see story here](#))

Network Rail has restored a former Suffolk wetland at Cattawade to its original state, to increase biodiversity and improve climate resilience along the railway. The site was drained nearly 180 years ago to protect the railway embankment on the London to Norwich line, destroying a wetland habitat. The restoration (carried out by **QTS**) utilised 'nature-based' solutions including placing almost 4000 tonnes of granite and other erosion-resistant rocks along the embankment to create a protective 'rock armour' wall. Channels were dug across the site to enable water to flow across the area, and a series of two-metre 'mounds' were created just above the waterline so wetland birds will be able to nest and lay their eggs.

'LIVING ROOF' CYCLE SHELTER UNVEILED ([see story here](#))

A new cycle shelter with a living roof has opened at Chappel & Wakes Colne station to improve facilities for cyclists and encourage wildlife at the same time. The project, a first on the **Greater Anglia** network, was delivered in partnership with the station's dedicated volunteer adoption team. The living roof contains drought-resistant sedum plants, which will provide a range of habitats and seasonal flowers, and includes a water feature with plants that support aquatic life, along with insect houses for solitary bees and other small insects. Once established, the vegetation layer will help create a valuable habitat for pollinators such as bees and butterflies, while also absorbing rainwater, improving air quality and enhancing the overall appearance of the station.

BRIDGING A GAP IN THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY ([see story here](#))

Expedition Engineering and **Format Engineers** have launched a digital platform, **Re-Bridge**, designed to accelerate the re-use of structural steel in bridge construction. The platform will connect asset owners, engineers, designers, local authorities,

and industry partners, providing a shared space to catalogue, identify and directly reuse bridges. By facilitating collaboration across the supply chain, the platform aims to unlock the value of existing assets that might otherwise go to waste. It is supported by the **Useful Simple Trust** and **ICE**. Re-Bridge will support direct reuse of components, reducing embodied carbon in construction, lowering project and material costs, extending the life cycle of materials, and retaining the value of infrastructure.

JCB AND CESAR ADD EMISSIONS CHECKING ([see story here](#))

JCB has adopted security tracking system **CESAR's** Emissions Compliance Verification, making it easier to confirm the emissions category of its RS generators. **CESAR** combines a tamper-proof label with hidden transponders and unique DNA-based adhesive to make it possible to identify machines, protecting against theft. **CESAR ECV** adds to this by including the machine's emissions category, allowing for simple checks as generators move between sites, ensuring compliance with relevant site requirements.

BIODIVERSITY BLOOMS FOLLOWING MAJOR GREEN UPGRADE ([see story here](#))

TransPennine Express has completed a major biodiversity upgrade at Yarm Station, transforming underused railway land into thriving wildlife habitats while creating a greener, more welcoming environment for passengers and the local community. The project has seen thousands of native bulbs planted across station embankments, alongside the creation of new wildflower meadows designed to support pollinators and other animals. In addition, 70 metres of native hedgerow and 14 tree species have been introduced, boosting the biodiversity of the area.

A NEW PATH TOWARDS NET ZERO ([see story here](#))

A new performance evaluation has been developed under the Net Zero Carbon Building Standard, allowing buildings that are not in full alignment with the standard to measure their performance using the same metrics.

The new evaluations have been designed to allow for the upskilling, data collection and relative improvements needed to put the industry on track to be fully aligned with the standard. While buildings must meet all of the standard's requirements to be classed as Net Zero Carbon Aligned, the performance evaluations will allow developers to show how projects meet individual aspects. While not the same status as being Net Zero Carbon Aligned, a verified Performance Evaluation acts as a "report card" for the building, using the same metrics and measurements.

RECTICEL CLOSES INSULATION LOOP ([see story here](#))

Recticel has opened a new plant in Belgium to recycle insulation board production waste into raw materials, closing a loop in the insulation manufacturing process. The Wevelgem plant will be able to take post-industrial PIR (polyisocyanurate) insulation board production waste and transform into high-quality recycled polyol, a key raw material used to manufacture new PIR boards, enabling conversion of PIR offcuts and production scrap from its manufacturing sites back into usable polyol for new products. This closed loop delivers a significant reduction in waste, lowering dependence on raw materials, and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS GOES EMISSIONS FREE IN BOOTLE ([see story here](#))

Galliford Try is powering a construction compound in Merseyside using green hydrogen, a first for a National Highways project. All the electricity for the construction compound is being powered by hydrogen rather than from the grid or diesel generators. Three site offices, toilets, kitchen, drying room and two EV charging points have all being powered by the hydrogen system since the scheme started in November.

CIRIA OFFERS CLIMATE RISK GUIDE ([see story here](#))

The **Construction Industry Research and Information Association** (CIRIA) has released a guide to the impact of climate change on geo-risks across the development life cycle. The *Good practice guide for managing climate change and extreme weather in land development: effective management of geo-based risks* is the first guidance of its kind to directly connect projected climate change impacts with their physical effects on geotechnical and geoenvironmental conditions across the full development life cycle.

VOLVO & HITACHI PARTNER ON SITE ELECTRIFICATION ([see story here](#))

Volvo Construction Equipment and Hitachi Energy have agreed to collaborate on ways to move from individual electric equipment to fully emissions free construction sites. The companies aim to develop end-to-end approaches that support the deployment of zero-emission construction sites. The collaboration brings together electric construction equipment with clean power supply, energy management, and system integration capabilities.

TRAINING, RECRUITMENT & EMPLOYMENT

FRAUD GANG SENTENCED FOR FIXING SAFETY TESTS FOR CSCS CARDS ([see story here](#))

Three men have been sentenced after a **Met Police** investigation uncovered a construction test fraud racket that helped more than 70 people cheat health and safety exams using Bluetooth earpieces. The year-long scam saw candidates fed answers through a concealed bluetooth earpiece during online CITB tests needed to secure CSCS cards and gain access to construction sites. Police launched the probe after the **Construction Industry Training Board** raised concerns about organised cheating at test centres across London.

HMRC BROADENS CIS FRAUD POWERS BEYOND DIRECT OFFENDERS ([see story here](#))

Construction firms are being told to urgently tighten subcontractor checks as a major overhaul to Construction Industry Scheme fraud rules takes effect. The changes that came into force from 6 April mark the biggest shake-up to CIS compliance in two decades and push liability well beyond firms directly involved in wrongdoing. Under the new regime, **HM Revenue & Customs** can strip businesses of gross payment status and pursue directors personally for tax losses if they "knew or should

have known" fraud was taking place anywhere in their supply chain. These measures are modelled on VAT countermeasures that have proved effective at disrupting supply chain fraud losses.

BOOTCAMP BRINGS WOMEN INTO CONSTRUCTION ([see story here](#))

The Skills Centre and NOCN Group have launched a CPCS-backed programme of construction 'bootcamps' designed to fast track entry into construction, with the latest session focusing on bringing women into the sector. The bootcamps are designed to equip learners with the practical experience and industry-recognised qualifications needed to operate construction plant machinery safely and effectively. Learners completing the bootcamps gain both hands-on training and the CPCS certification required to begin work on site. The training is delivered at The Skills Centre's Earl's Court facility, currently the only dedicated CPCS training site in London, giving learners access to specialist equipment and real-world operating environments.

REL COMMITS TO TRAINING NEXT GENERATION OF OVERHEAD LINE WORKERS ([see story here](#))

Electrification specialist REL, a subsidiary of QTS Group, has successfully delivered a new talent development pilot for overhead line workers. The training programme has been designed to upskill the next generation of overhead line equipment construction (OLEC) linesmen and support the long-term future of the sector. It forms part of REL's plans to tackle the rail industry skills shortage head on, with recent data from the National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) projecting that 12,000 additional workers will be required annually to fulfil demand for services.

NOCN LAUNCHES SKILLS PASSPORT ([see story here](#))

NOCN Group, which administers the CPCS and other card schemes, has launched a new digital skills passport, which will allow holders to record, verify and share their certifications digitally. It has been developed alongside NOCN's skills hub, providing individuals with a secure record of their skills, and aiming to give employers real-time insight into competence, connecting training, learning, assessment and certification within a single integrated framework. The platform architecture works alongside existing systems to improve access to skills information, digital logbooks and records as well as the passport. By bringing credentials, qualifications, CPD, compliance, skills recognition and development into one integrated environment, it will simplify administration, increase transparency, and support scalable use across employers, providers and individuals.

GETTING IT RIGHT PAYS DIVIDENDS ([see story here](#))

The Get It Right Initiative (GIRI) has released the results of a two-year pilot with Kier, BAM Nuttall, VolkerStevin and Taylor Woodrow, demonstrating the value of error avoidance training. The pilot was established with support from the CITB, to enable them to become accredited GIRI training providers. During the pilot, trainees were asked about steps they took to mitigate errors and their awareness of potential causes, before and after they had completed training programmes. 'Errors', in the context of the programme, extend through the design and build process, including failures of clash detection during design, and mistakes during construction. The businesses involved have trained 4,575 delegates between them, working across 25 projects over 26 months. Over the course of the programme, those who had completed training spotted £92.6m in potential cost of errors.

AURORA TRAINS SERVICE LEAVERS FOR WIND ([see story here](#))

Scotland's Aurora Energy Services has launched a programme to enable armed forces leavers to use their engineering skills in the wind energy sector. The programme is being delivered at Aurora's Renewable Energy Training Centre in Inverness and designed to convert military service leavers into immediately deployable personnel for onshore and offshore wind projects. Two participants have already found jobs in the industry.

The seven-week pilot programme aligns with broader efforts from government and industry bodies to support workforce transition, and was jointly funded by the Ministry of Defence and the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB).

ECITB TRAINING TACKLES WELDING DEMAND ([see story here](#))

The ECITB has launched an 'upskilling' programme, aiming to tackle a predicted 47% rise in demand for welders. Its Labour Forecasting Tool predicts that the number of welders required in the engineering construction industry could rise to more than 2,150 by 2030, up from 1,470 in 2025. A new six-week programme has been designed to train individuals with little or basic welding knowledge, delivered through a blended learning approach. This has now been piloted successfully, and ECITB is calling for training providers to deliver the Multi-position Fillet Welding programme as part of a wider rollout across Great Britain.

ASBESTOS APPRENTICESHIPS STREAMLINED ([see story here](#))

The Asbestos Testing and Consultancy Association (ATaC) has joined with apprenticeships provider Tiro to launch two revised asbestos programmes, to tackle the technical skills gap in the asbestos sector, by reducing time to competence from 15 months to just 12. The UK asbestos surveying industry is currently facing a demographic crisis – with many experts within 10 years of retirement, a significant "recruitment void" is emerging. The new programmes move away from "one-size-fits-all" training to offer two distinct, specialised routes. Apprentices can choose between training as site-based analysts and surveyors, in a programme aligned to the Royal Society for Public Health's Level 3 Award in Asbestos Air Monitoring and Clearance Procedures. Alternatively, they can follow a path into laboratory-based bulk analysis. This is aligned to the RSPH Level 3 Awards in Asbestos Bulk Analysis.

CSCS UPGRADES SMART CARD CHECKS ([see story here](#))

CSCS Smart Check has upgraded the data shared during a card scan, including why the card was checked, the check location, and the site name or ID. When a card is scanned, information is shared using an API (application programming interface). This can be accessed via the website/app, along with on site access systems and induction platforms built by

approved IT partners or employers. A new API adds more data, comprising GPS coordinates showing where the card was checked; a site ID or name; and a reason for the scan, indicating whether the check was a pre-induction, induction, re-induction, routine check, site entry, or other purpose. The upgrade aims to ensure compliance with the Building Safety Act, and to better inform industry workforce planning.

FUNDING BOOST FOR CONSTRUCTION V LEVELS ([see story here](#))

The government is pledging a £96m boost for construction training as new V Levels are introduced in more site subjects. New subjects include construction design, bricklaying and plumbing which replace legacy qualifications like BTECs. Tens of thousands of extra work placements will also be created for learners who start their construction courses this September. The new V (vocational) Levels will sit alongside A levels and T levels. Equivalent to one A Level, they will allow students to mix and match academic and vocational subjects.

QTS HOSTS CAREERS EVENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN WEST OF SCOTLAND ([see story here](#))

National rail contractor **QTS** has hosted its annual 'The Future of Rail' event at its headquarters in South Lanarkshire, which was attended by several of its partners, including Network Rail. Together, they spent two days promoting the rail industry's ability to offer careers for young people. Now in its fifth year, the popular event aims to engage pupils and highlight the wide variety career paths available within rail.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES 'BETTER CONNECTED' STRATEGY ([see story here](#))

Andy Burnham, the Mayor of Greater Manchester, recently met with community rail leaders and volunteers as the Government unveiled its new Better Connected transport strategy, which shines a spotlight on the growing role of grassroots groups in shaping the future of transport. **Community Rail Network** said the visit put community rail centre stage, showcasing how local groups are helping to create more accessible, inclusive and better-used railway services, and links between transport modes. The mayor learned more about volunteers' work to transform stations into welcoming community spaces and help people feel confident using the railway.

METRO TIMBERS BOOST NORTH TYNESIDE NATURE TRAIL ([see story here](#))

A donation of used timber from the **Tyne and Wear Metro** has delivered a biodiversity boost to a much-loved nature trail at the **Stephenson Steam Railway** in North Tyneside. Logs from Metro's lineside will be used to support the heritage railway's Woodland Walk, which opened to the public last year. It will help conserve and improve the walking route, supporting the wildlife along the footpath, which has been created on what used to be two-acres of wasteland.

SIEMENS PARTNERS WITH COMMUNITY TO ADOPT AND TRANSFORM RAILWAY STATION ([see story here](#))

Siemens Mobility has become the first corporate partner of **Community Rail Network** to officially adopt a railway station, joining forces with the local community to transform Aston Station into a vibrant and welcoming hub for residents and visitors. Plans for the station range from immediate practical support, such as regular litter picks and general upkeep, to longer-term enhancements including new benches, planters, and community artwork.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

HSE TARGETS CONSTRUCTION WITH TOUGHER INCIDENT REPORTING SHAKE-UP ([see story here](#))

The **Health and Safety Executive** plans a major overhaul of workplace incident reporting with sweeping changes to how site risks, plant incidents and occupational diseases must be reported. The review of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 signals a step-change for contractors, who face a significant expansion in what must be logged with the regulator. At the heart of the planned reform to RIDDOR reporting is a major tightening of dangerous occurrence rules aimed squarely at construction activity. Tunnelling is being brought firmly into scope, with incidents on works involving tunnels over 1.2m in diameter set to become reportable. Falling objects reporting rules will also be widened along with mandatory dangerous occurrence reporting for overturning incidents. Structural failures, such as collapses of roofs, ceilings, temporary works and trenches all set to trigger reporting requirements. Alongside incident reporting, contractors face a broader net on occupational health.

EUROTUNNEL FINED FOR FAILINGS WHICH RESULTED IN INJURIES TO ENGINEERING SURVEYOR ([see story here](#))

Channel Tunnel Group (CTGL/Eurotunnel) has been fined after pleading guilty to an offence under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 following investigation/prosecution by the **Office of Rail and Road** (ORR).

The incident, involving an engineering surveyor, happened at Eurotunnel's Folkestone terminal, who stood at the bottom of one of the lighting masts with the Eurotunnel maintenance team that was assisting with their inspection. As a lighting carriage was being winched to the top of the mast 18m in the air, the wires holding it failed and the 115kg unit fell, striking the surveyor who suffered multiple serious injuries. CTGL had control of maintenance of the lighting masts, their associated equipment, and the premises in which they were situated. It breached its duty under Section 4 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 as it failed to take measures to ensure that the plant at the premises, namely the lighting masts, were safe and without risks to health.

LACK OF SITE HOT WATER LANDS CONTRACTOR IN COURT ([see story here](#))

A West Midlands construction company has been fined for repeated welfare failures at four different sites across the region. An HSE inspection at a site in Telford identified failings including no hot or warm water in the toilets and a lack of suitable rest facilities for workers, resulting in two improvement notices being served. On three previous occasions, the company had been found to have breached the same legislation.

LIGHTING TOWER HITS POWER LINE ON ROAD MAINTENANCE JOB ([see story here](#))

A tree surgeon suffered a powerful electric shock from an overhead power line while carrying out maintenance to hedges on a busy road. The accident occurred at night when the mobile lighting tower he was pushing made contact with an overhead power line. An HSE investigation into the incident found his employer had requested a permit to carry out the work of a night time, due to the needs of traffic flow, but failed to adequately plan for or risk assess the dangers posed by overhead power lines. They did not implement suitable control measures, such as barriers, instruction or training in operating the mobile lighting tower. Overhead powerlines had not been properly assessed or controlled, particularly following the change to night time working requiring the use of a mobile lighting tower.

IPAF OFFERS MEWP BATTERY GUIDANCE ([see story here](#))

The International Powered Access Federation has released a new guidance pack on the safe use and maintenance of MEWP batteries, designed to help the industry understand battery-related risks and implement best practices that support safe, reliable, and sustainable operations throughout the equipment lifecycle. The pack includes a technical guidance document, three toolbox talks and two safety posters. Together, it supports owners, rental companies, operators, and maintenance providers in managing batteries safely and effectively throughout their service life.

HSE WARNS AGAINST DRY CUTTING ([see story here](#))

HSE has issued guidance making dry cutting of engineered stone illegal and demanding the use of lower silica content materials, pointing to the risk of silicosis, following the deaths of two workers in the sector. The guidance forms part of a package of action the regulator is taking to prevent deaths from silicosis. The guidance makes clear that dry cutting of engineered stone is unacceptable and that water suppression techniques are how businesses should meet the legal requirement.

COSTAIN ENHANCES PPE OFFERING TO FOCUS ON INCLUSIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY ([see story here](#))

Costain is offering an enhanced range of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and workwear products, reinforcing its commitment to safety, inclusivity and sustainability. In cooperation with its Disability and Wellbeing Network and Women's Network, Costain has worked with PPE and workwear supply partner **Arco**, to complete a major update to its PPE and workwear catalogue. More than 150 inclusive and sustainable items are now available to Costain's people to improve comfort, accessibility and fit for its workforce.

ROAD WORKER LOSES LEG IN MILLING MACHINE ([see story here](#))

A road planing contractor has been fined after a worker's leg became entangled in a milling machine and had to be amputated, after the operator's foot became caught by the rotating milling drum, dragging him into the machine. An HSE investigation found the company had failed to take effective measures to prevent access to the dangerous rotating milling drum of the road planing machine. The manufacturer's 'protective bow', designed to restrict access to the milling drum, had not been attached to the machine. The investigation also found it was common practice for the company to operate milling machines without the guard fitted.

WORKER CRUSHED DURING WIND TURBINE CONSTRUCTION ([see story here](#))

Siemens Gamesa has been fined after an employee suffered life-changing injuries. The task being undertaken at the time of the incident involved building the web section of a turbine blade. The incident occurred at the pre-cast section of the web, which sits at the root end of the blade where it connects to the rotor, which weighs approximately 800kg. As the injured employee and a colleague were preparing the pre-cast section to be wrapped in materials, it fell towards them after support poles, which had been holding the structure in place, were removed. An HSE investigation found that the company failed to adequately assess the risks arising from the work; failed to devise and implement a robust safe system of work to prevent employees from removing the support poles; and failed to adequately train employees in safe working methods. Following the incident, the company implemented a system whereby support poles are locked in place and can only be unlocked by a nominated person holding the key, once the relevant stage of the build has been completed.

FENCING CONTRACTOR SUFFERS SHOCK ([see story here](#))

A fencing contractor has been fined after an employee suffered an electric shock and burns after striking a live underground cable. He was working on a construction site in Manchester as part of a team installing security fencing, and was using a breaker to dig into the ground in preparation to install the metal fencing when the father-of-three struck a live underground cable causing electric shock, which resulted in him sustaining multiple burn injuries to his stomach, chest and arms. An HSE investigation found the contractors had failed to implement suitable and sufficient controls to prevent risk from underground services. Plans or other suitable information about all buried services in the area should be obtained and reviewed before any excavation work starts.

CORPORATE & COMMERCIAL**WORK STOPPED ON SITE AFTER COUNCIL BLUNDER** ([see story here](#))

Work has been stopped on a job in Nottinghamshire after the local council broke its own procurement rules. **Ashfield District Council** said internal checks identified governance issues within the Automated Distribution and Manufacturing Centre (ADMC) project. **Lindum** started on the site as main contractor last Summer and the council has now confirmed works were paused in January. After council officials raised concerns an independent review confirmed that some elements of the project did not follow the Council's established governance and procurement processes including work being delivered and paid for before contracts were in place and increases in infrastructure costs that should have been escalated for approval earlier than they were.

PAY CAPS SCRAPPED IN MEGA SCHEMES RESET TO LURE TOP TALENT ([see story here](#))

The Government Major Projects Portfolio has been trimmed from around 200 schemes to about 80, in a move designed to sharpen focus on the most critical programmes and improve oversight. The reset also confirms a shift in control to the **National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority**, which replaces the **Infrastructure and Projects Authority** and will concentrate scrutiny and support where risks are highest. Driven by the **Office for Value for Money**, the reset is aimed at injecting private sector-style discipline into public delivery – tightening accountability, improving cost control and speeding up decision-making. For construction, one of the biggest changes is a break from Whitehall pay constraints. Delivery teams will now be able to offer market-rate salaries for specialist roles, tackling long-standing skills gaps on complex programmes.

ARDMORE TO APPEAL LANDMARK BUILDING SAFETY ACT RULING ([see story here](#))

Ardmore is planning to appeal a landmark High Court decision that drags multiple group companies into a £14.9m fire safety defects bill after its main contracting arm fell into administration. The ruling in *Crest Nicholson v Ardmore* escalates how the Building Safety Act 2022 can be used to pursue liabilities across corporate structures, with the court making clear that group companies can be forced to stand behind historic defects. With Ardmore preparing an appeal, the case is now set to become a defining test of how far the Building Safety Act can reach into contractor group structures and who ultimately pays for legacy defects.

EX-LAFARGE CEO JAILED OVER SYRIAN IS 'PARTNERSHIP' ([see story here](#))

Lafarge has been fined more than €1m, and its former CEO sentenced to six years in prison, by a French court, after the company developed a 'genuine commercial partnership with IS'. In 2010, the cement maker completed work on a new cement plant in Jalabiya, Syria. A year later, the Syrian people rose up against their government, and in the multi-sided armed conflict that followed, Islamic State militants took control of large swathes of Syrian territory, including the area around the plant. Other Western and international businesses left the country, but Lafarge stayed, only evacuating its expatriate staff, forming a "genuine commercial partnership with IS". The company had paid €5.6m through its Syrian subsidiary to militants including IS and Al-Qaeda affiliate Jabhat al-Nusra to keep the plant, and the trucks that supplied it, running. Such financing of terrorist organisations was essential in enabling the terrorist organisation to gain control of Syria's natural resources, allowing it to finance terrorist acts within the region and abroad, particularly in Europe.

MATERIALS FIRMS URGED TO EXPLAIN PRICE RISE REASONS ([see story here](#))

In its latest update the **Construction Leadership Council's** Construction Material Supply Chain Group said: "One of the key challenges across the supply chain remains the lack of detailed explanation accompanying price increases, making it difficult to justify and communicate these costs to clients. Clearer evidence and transparency would be welcomed, even if the increases themselves are not."

The group said war in the Middle East would continue to push prices up for the foreseeable future despite no growth in demand, with only concrete plain roof tiles currently in short supply. It added: "While there is acceptance that price pressure is justified in some areas, particularly for energy-intensive products (e.g. steel, bricks, concrete, glass, insulation) and petrochemicals (e.g. adhesives, bitumen, PIR, and PVC pipe), increases in other product categories are considered difficult to attribute solely to underlying costs."

GOVERNMENT TO REVIEW STEEL TARIFFS AFTER CONTRACTOR BACKLASH ([see story here](#))

The Government has agreed to review the impact of its looming steel tariff crackdown after construction leaders warned it could derail projects and squeeze margins. Industry bodies including the Construction Leadership Council, British Constructional Steelwork Association and Construction Products Association met ministers last month to flag the risks tied to the planned July shake-up. Contractors said the planned 60% cut in import quotas and imposition of 50% tariffs above limits risk piling fresh cost pressure onto a supply chain already battling rising energy, fuel and shipping costs. In recent months the price of structural steel has jumped by up to 30% due to these pressures alone.

MORE FINES AND BANS FOR FORMER CARILLION CHIEFS ([see story here](#))

Two former **Carillion** finance directors and three company accountants have been fined and banned by the accounting industry watchdog. The **Financial Reporting Council's** latest ruling saw the former Group Finance Director, and his successor in that role fined alongside exclusion from the **Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales** for 15/10 years. The fines follow heavy penalties for the pair imposed by the **Financial Conduct Authority**. The FRC also imposed fines and bans on three other former Carillion senior accountants who acted recklessly and failed to act with integrity in connection with the preparation of accounting information for Carillion's financial statements, prior to the company's collapse in 2018.

LONDON OFFICE FIT-OUT SECOND MOST PRICEY IN THE WORLD ([see story here](#))

Consultant **Turner & Townsend's** latest global fit-out report ranks London behind only New York, despite costs in the capital easing 1% over the last year. High-specification fit-out costs in London now stand at \$5,872 (£4,397) per sq m, just behind New York at \$5,886 (£4,407) per sq m. The consultant said demand for premium, highly-amenitised Grade A offices is continuing to drive fit-out budgets as firms invest in better workplaces to tempt staff back into offices and compete for talent. AI-ready offices are also adding to costs as occupiers demand smarter systems for lighting, climate control, space usage, collaboration areas and digital connectivity.

FORTERRA PLANS BRICK AND BLOCK PRICE HIKES ([see story here](#))

Forterra is looking to implement "pricing surcharges" on concrete products and bricks from 1st June in response to cost inflation, driven by significant increases in the cost of diesel, transport services and natural gas, albeit the latter is hedged to a degree. It has also been slowing down production with a shift to more output in the second half of the year.

LATE PAYMENTS BILL MOVES FORWARD ([see story here](#))

The government has introduced the Small Business Protections Bill, which promises to tackle late payments and to ban retentions in construction. It aims to put a clear duty on large firms to pay smaller suppliers on time, to give the certainty they need to keep investing, supporting jobs and growing their communities. It will include stronger new powers for the Small Business Commissioner to investigate, adjudicate disputes and fine persistent late payers with potential penalties worth tens of millions. It will also place a 60-day cap on payment terms for large firms, introduce mandatory interest on late payments, and take action to ban the practice of retentions in construction. Under the Bill, the industry will get a two-year transition period once the relevant provisions become law. Retention clauses can still be agreed during that window, but will become ineffective after a further one-year run-off, meaning retentions would not be fully phased out for three years from the introduction of the new rules ([see here](#)).

TWENTY FIRMS COULD FACE CHARGES OVER GRENFELL FIRE ([see story here](#))

Metropolitan Police have confirmed that up to 20 companies and 57 individuals could face criminal charges over the Grenfell Tower fire. The police investigation is set to complete by September when files will be handed to the Crown Prosecution Service for charging decisions. Potential charges include corporate manslaughter, gross negligence manslaughter, misconduct in public office, fraud and health and safety matters. The police said 14,400 statements had been taken and more than 27,000 exhibits, including cladding, insulation, doors, windows and other parts of the building, down to screws, nut and bolts, are stored in a warehouse.

CONTRACTORS FORCED INTO WEEKLY PRICE CHECKS AS VOLATILITY GROWS ([see story here](#))

Subcontractors are being forced to check material prices and availability every week as renewed market volatility hits construction. Southern Construction Framework's latest market report for the first quarter of the year warns that pricing and supply conditions are now shifting week by week rather than month by month. The report, based on a survey of over 150 subcontractors, said tender workload rose by 2.6% during the first quarter as clients continued to test the market and bring schemes forward. But conversion from tender to site remains patchy as cost pressure, funding gaps and supply chain caution hold projects back. Build costs jumped 5.8% in the first quarter, outstripping headline UK CPI inflation of around 3%. Trades with the largest increase included: Steelwork (+13.3%), Groundworks (+6.3%), Concrete Frames: (+5.9%).

LEGISLATION & STANDARDS

BS 7671 ADDS BATTERY GUIDANCE ([see story here](#))

The BSI and IET have updated the Wiring Regulations, BS 7671, with a new chapter on battery storage. The new chapter covers stationary secondary batteries, responding to the rapid growth of energy-storage technologies and their increasing deployment both with and without solar PV systems. It sets out requirements relating to system design, power conversion equipment, bidirectional or hybrid inverters and the suitability of protective devices for two-way energy flow, an essential consideration as battery systems are increasingly used for vehicle-to-home and vehicle-to-grid applications. Other safety-critical matters covered include appropriate battery location, ventilation, and fire-risk mitigation.

BUILDING CONTROL SHAKE-UP BACKED BY MINISTERS ([see story here](#))

Ministers have pledged £55m to overhaul England's building control system as they consider banning clients from choosing their own inspectors. The Government has accepted the core principles of the Building Control Independent Panel, which warned the current system is fragmented, inconsistent and exposed to commercial pressure. The panel said the present set-up cannot provide consistent assurance that building work is safe, with inspectors battling shortages, uneven enforcement and conflicts of interest. Its key recommendation is to end the long-standing right of dutyholders to pick their own building control provider. Ministers have not yet committed to the full ban, but will carry out further analysis and consultation.

SECTOR NEWS/TRENDS

RAIL

EAST WEST RAIL REVEALS LATEST CONSULTATION ([see story here](#))

East West Railway Company (EWR Co) has launched its latest consultation which includes updated proposals for the new railway. Key design updates include an accelerated construction programme to deliver the benefits of the railway to communities earlier and the delivery of up to five trains an hour. These proposals now take into account the plans for the Universal Resort near Bedford include provision for a station at Stewartby to serve the theme park. As a result, EWR is now proposed to be built in new delivery phases* - replacing the previous connection stages - with new stations and sections of the railway opening as soon as they are ready, rather than waiting for the whole route to be completed.

PEAKS AND DALES LINE FEASIBILITY STUDY SUBMITTED TO DFT ([see story here](#))

The Feasibility Study for the proposed Peaks and Dales Line, a reinstated rail corridor linking the North West and East Midlands between Manchester and Derby, via Chinley, Buxton, Bakewell and Matlock, has now been formally submitted to the Department for Transport for review.

APRIL ISSUE OF RAIL DIRECTOR [is here](#), and May is [here](#).

MASS TRANSIT TASKFORCE TO RESHAPE FUTURE OF TRANSPORT IN TOWNS AND CITIES ([see story here](#))

New tram, light rail and bus networks in towns and cities have taken a step forward, as the Government has launched the new Mass Transit Taskforce. The group, which includes leading experts from the world of transport, industry, finance and academia, will identify the biggest hurdles facing the introduction of mass transit systems across the UK and how to overcome them.

CMA RECOMMENDS OVERHAUL OF RAIL PROCUREMENT ([see story here](#))

The **Competition and Markets Authority** (CMA) has published the findings of its market study into road and rail infrastructure and is recommending concrete actions to drive down costs and drive up innovation and productivity. It is recommending Government embraces a more strategic and coordinated approach to delivering road and rail infrastructure with a clear plan for the sector. Alongside recommending concrete actions in road and rail, the CMA said it believed that the lessons learned have broader applicability across public infrastructure procurement.

OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

ROLLS ROYCE SIGNS SMALL NUCLEAR PLANTS CONTRACT ([see story here](#))

Rolls-Royce SMR has formally signed the contract with **Great British Energy – Nuclear** to deliver the UK's first Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). The UK's first SMR project at Wylfa on Anglesey in North Wales will support around 3,000 jobs at peak construction and thousands more across the UK supply chain. The contract will require R-RSMR to deliver against key milestones as it commences site-specific design, regulatory engagement, and planning processes, ahead of a future Final Investment Decision. **BAM Nuttall**, **Laing O'Rourke** and **Atkins** are part of the consortium developing its SMR design.

COVENTRY AIRPORT £2.5BN GIGAFACTORY ZONE CLEARED FOR TAKE-OFF ([see story here](#))

A £2.5bn plan to turn Coventry Airport into a major battery manufacturing hub has secured a crucial planning boost after councillors waved through detailed proposals for the first phase. **Warwick District Council** gave unanimous approval for seven manufacturing buildings at the GreenPower Park site, unlocking 4.8m sq ft of industrial space and moving the flagship scheme firmly towards delivery.

MICROSOFT DATA CENTRE CAMPUS IN LEEDS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL ([see story here](#))

Microsoft's plans for a major new data centre campus at a former power station in Leeds looks set to get the green light from councillors next week (23 April 2026). The hybrid application seeks full planning permission for the development of a data centre campus, together with associated energy, power and water infrastructure, access, security and landscaping, to include three data centre buildings, each with a gross internal area of about 424,000 sq ft. Outline planning permission is also sought for about 160,000 sq ft of warehouse and distribution development, with HGV charging bays, access, parking and landscaping.

NEW FREEPORT EAST TRANSPORT MASTERPLAN UNVEILED ([see story here](#))

A newly launched Freeport East Transport Masterplan sets out how 14 investments will maintain world-class connectivity unlocking up to £5.5bn GVA and over 10,000 new jobs in the Freeport region alone. Freeport East is centred on the Ports of Felixstowe, Harwich and Ipswich offering national and global connections unmatched anywhere else in the UK. While the region attracts high value investment across several of the UK's Industrial Strategy priority sectors, its growth will depend on the delivery of enabling transport infrastructure.

£60BN HOSPITAL REBUILD FACES FRESH DELAY DANGER ([see story here](#))

The key next phase of the £60bn New Hospital Programme is facing mounting delivery risk just as major construction is due to start from next year. MPs have warned that wave 1 – a £8.9bn pipeline of 16 hospital schemes – could trigger wider delays across the programme if early projects slip. The Public Accounts Committee said the **Department of Health and Social Care** has set aside just 3% contingency funding for the 2025-30 period, leaving “very little buffer” to absorb cost increases or disruption. With enabling works still to begin on many schemes, MPs warned any early overruns could have knock-on effects across later hospital builds. The risk is heightened by the fact wave 1 will be the first to use the unproven Hospital 2.0 design, which is still not expected to be finalised until summer 2026.

UK INFRASTRUCTURE MUST EVOLVE TO MEET SOCIETY'S NEEDS ([see story here](#))

Project-by-project delivery is no longer fit for purpose, according to a new white paper from global engineering firm **Egis**. Maintaining the status quo is leaving infrastructure across the UK and Ireland increasingly exposed. The report, *[From projects to programmes: how infrastructure can keep pace with a changing world](#)*, draws on insights from specialists across transport, water, cities, energy and digital infrastructure to argue that networks must be planned and operated as long-term systems, not as a series of isolated projects. Climate change, ageing assets and funding pressure are already pushing networks beyond their intended limits. Continuing with the current approach will only increase cost, disruption and risk.

£1BN DATA CENTRE GETS GREEN LIGHT IN WEST LONDON ([see story here](#))

Pure Data Centres and **SEGRO** have secured planning approval for a £1bn, 72MW hyperscale data centre at Premier Park in west London. The **Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation** planning committee has backed plans to replace a redundant warehouse with a three-storey, liquid-cooled facility. The 22,365 sq m scheme will house nine data halls alongside office space, plant, storage and a secure entrance pavilion, supported by a dedicated substation to power the high-capacity site.

GO-AHEAD FOR ANOTHER GIANT DATA CENTRE AT REDHILL ([see story here](#))

Planners have given the green light to a new 15MW data centre in Surrey. It is the latest stage of expansion of the site which was acquired by real estate investor **Castleforge** in partnership with **Galaxy Data Centers** last year. Situated on the existing 3.1-hectare industrial estate at Foxboro Business Park, the consented project comprises a single two-storey data centre with four data halls and an accompanying office block.

1M SQ FT NORTHUMBERLAND INDUSTRIAL PARK APPROVED ([see story here](#))

Northumberland planners unanimously approved an outline plan for the 126-acre West Hartford Park development at Cramlington. West Hartford Park is the largest remaining strategic employment allocation in Northumberland and is expected to support more than 2,000 jobs and unlock over £150m of investment. Plans include flexible industrial,

manufacturing and logistics units ranging from 40,000 sq ft to 532,000 sq ft, alongside offices, innovation space and supporting retail amenity. The site sits close to the deep-sea Port of Blyth and will be marketed as a "near port" location serving offshore wind, clean technology, advanced manufacturing and logistics occupiers.

PANATTONI PLANS 23-ACRE SCHEME IN WAKEFIELD ([see story here](#))

Developer **Panattoni** has acquired a 23-acre site at Wakefield Europort, West Yorkshire, from **Delin Property** where it will deliver a 500,000 sq ft speculative cross-docked logistics and warehousing scheme. Construction is scheduled to start this quarter on Panattoni Wakefield 500 which will feature 56 dock doors, 8 level access doors, yard depths of up to 50 metres, 62 HGV spaces and 384 car parking spaces.

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO DRIVE £1.1BN EAST BIRMINGHAM REGENERATION ([see story here](#))

The **Birmingham East Mayoral Development Corporation** (BEMDC) is expected to generate a multibillion-pound boost for the regional economy, bringing more than 50,000 jobs and 20,000 homes to East Birmingham. The BEMDC will set a new benchmark for how UK regions deliver regeneration at scale. Spanning an area the size of more than 600 football pitches, it will include some of the biggest regeneration projects in the UK and Europe including the £4bn Birmingham Knowledge Quarter, the HS2 Curzon Street Station and adjoining Central Heart site, the £2bn Smithfield development and a major creative industries hub in Digbeth.

DEVELOPER PROPOSES EXPANSION OF HUGE LOGISTICS PARK ([see story here](#))

The proposed expansion of one of Europe's largest distribution parks could create thousands of jobs and add hundreds of millions of pounds to the economy. Covering more than 550 acres, Magna Park Lutterworth is bounded by the M1, M6 and M69 motorways in a location widely known as the 'Golden Triangle'. It is home to major names such as Wayfair, Asda, Amazon, BT and Primark. **GLP** is proposing to build approximately 3.2 million sq ft of employment space on an area extending to about 319.6 acres, alongside an extension to the existing Bittesby Country Park.

TRENDS

CONTRACTORS HOLD BID DISCIPLINE AS PUBLIC WORK KEEPS JOBS FLOWING ([see story here](#))

Contractors are no longer chasing every job going as a steady flow of government-backed work allows firms to be more selective, according to **Gleeds'** Q1 2026 market survey. The latest survey of developers and contractors shows that rather than a weak market with firms chasing all opportunities, the contracting sector continues to be selective as appetite for risk reduces amid global uncertainty. Education remains the standout sector for tender opportunities, driven by a surge in SEND schemes and ongoing DfE programmes tackling the ageing school estate. Energy, infrastructure and defence are also providing a dependable stream of work, and data centres continue to punch above their weight, with hyperscale and AI-led demand fuelling a strong pipeline of complex, high-value projects.

SHOCKWAVES FROM IRAN WAR LIKELY TO BE FELT FOR SOME TIME ([see story here](#))

Construction companies risk being stuck in a "watch and wait mentality", a prominent consultancy has warned, as the industry feels the "shockwaves" from the Iran war. Multi-disciplinary consultancy **Pick Everard** said mitigating the impact of inflation and supply chain disruption requires active planning to overcome the threat of cracked construction pipelines and reduced demand. The warning follows its recent survey, which found 70 per cent of respondents working in construction fear prices and capacity will be severely affected as a result of oil restrictions within the next six months.

RECESSION FEARS DEEPEN AS BUILDING FACES SHARP DECLINE ([see story here](#))

Construction economists have slashed the outlook for the industry, warning output will fall 2.5% in 2026 as geopolitical shockwaves from the Gulf ripple through costs, confidence and project pipelines. Forecasters at the **Construction Products Association** say the sector faces a tough 12–18 months, with oil and industrial energy price spikes already feeding into double-digit product inflation and forcing clients to delay schemes.

CONSTRUCTION BUYERS REPORT RAMPANT COST INFLATION ([see story here](#))

Construction input cost inflation saw its steepest rise since January 2022 in the latest survey of industry buyers. The **S&P Global UK Construction Purchasing Managers' Index** highlighted another challenging month registering 39.7 in April, down from 45.6 in March and indicative of a sharp fall in overall business activity. Reduced output has been seen in each month since January 2025 and the latest reading was the weakest for five months. Fuel surcharges contributed to a rapid increase in purchasing prices across the construction sector. Around 69% of the survey panel reported a rise in their input costs in April (up from 48% in March), while only 2% signalled a decline. This pointed to the fastest overall rate of cost inflation since June 2022.

THOSE WE HAVE LOST (AND SOMETIMES REGAINED)

GROUNDWORKS FIRM FILES ADMINISTRATION NOTICE ([see story here](#))

Groundworks contractor **Mackoy** has filed a notice of intention to appoint an administrator. The Hampshire based firm is one of the biggest groundworks specialists in the South of England focused on infrastructure for housing and commercial schemes. Latest accounts for the year to March 31 2025 show a turnover of £23.3m.

BATHROOM POD MAKER FILES ADMINISTRATION NOTICE ([see story here](#))

Lancaster based bathroom pod specialist **Offsite Engineered Products UK** (OEP UK) has filed a notice of intention to appoint an administrator. Its sister company OEP Building Services went into administration in 2021 and was acquired by OEP UK led by managing director Iain Crabtree. Since then, OEP UK has won a series of pod supply deals with major contractors and developers. Turnover is estimated at around £5.8m.

LONDON BUILDER CEASES TRADING ([see story here](#))

London building and fitout contractor **Curo Construction** has ceased trading. Cash flow pressures had been mounting for months as subcontractors increasingly turned to credit reference and debt recovery agencies over unpaid bills, and came to a head earlier this month when a steelwork subcontractor lodged a winding-up petition against the contractor. Curo carved out a niche in the London refurbishment and fit-out market working across commercial offices, heritage schemes, industrial projects, data centres and film studios. Latest accounts for the year to September 2024 revealed turnover slumped from £157m to £108m after completion of the firm's flagship Shinfield Studios job and delays to new project starts.

JOBS AXED AS FALKIRK STEELWORK FIRMS COLLAPSE ([see story here](#))

Over 90 jobs have been axed after two connected Scottish steelwork firms collapsed into administration just days after workers staged a protest over unpaid wages. Falkirk-based sister companies **AIM Engineering & Fabrication Group** and **Hescott Engineering Company** have called in administrators after losing a major customer. Hescott turned over around £14m last year and was recently named by Scottish Water as its low-emission steel supply chain partner alongside ArcelorMittal, supporting the move to lower-carbon infrastructure and cut embodied carbon across Scottish Water's capital investment programme. The companies specialised in steel and metalwork fabrication for the construction, petrochemical, oil, gas and industrial processing sectors.