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SCSI

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land and construction
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TACKLING THE BIG ISSUES

THE SCSI'S PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS VITAL ISSUES IN PROPERTY, LAND AND CONSTRUCTION.

As summer comes to a close, attention has now turned to Budget 2024. The breadth of our collective expertise across the property, land and construction sectors positions the SCSI as a key voice in the Budget discourse. From addressing housing affordability challenges to supporting home buyers and those in the rented sector, promoting sustainable construction and attracting investment, the SCSI's Pre-Budget Submission calls on the Government to adequately fund vital supports.

Housing development: ensuring project viability and affordability

With the added pressure of continued high inflation, the SCSI's submission provides recommendations to improve the overall viability and affordability of projects. These recommendations include the reduction/removal of certain soft costs such as development and connection levies. The SCSI has also urged the Government to reconsider the delayed concrete levy, which will inevitably increase costs and pose challenges to development viability.

Residential property: supporting homebuyers and private landlords

In addition to driving down development costs, the SCSI has advocated for the Government to take a longer-term approach to buyer supports. In order to provide greater assurance for both buyers and developers, the Government should provide a longer-term announcement regarding the lifetime of both the Help to Buy Scheme and the First Home Scheme.

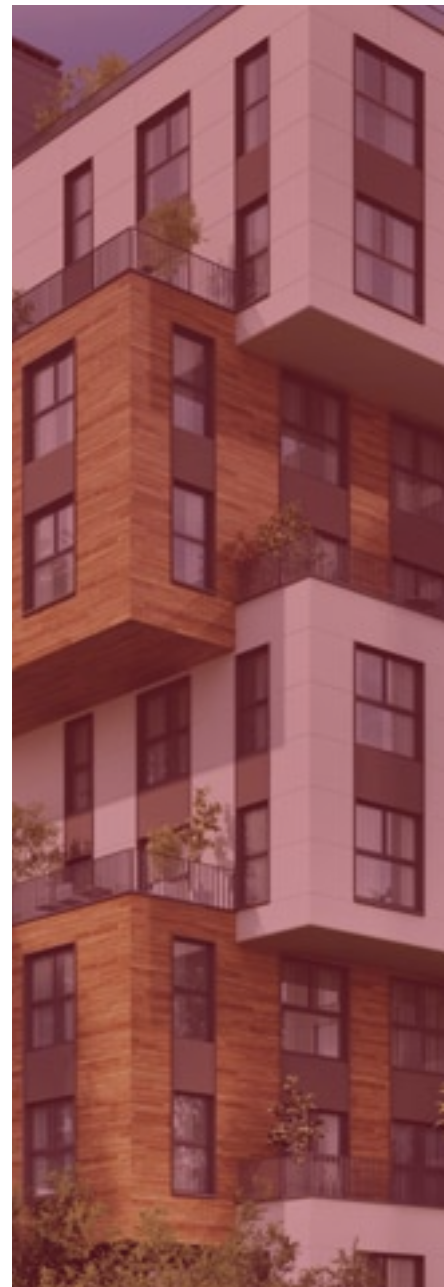
With the continued departure of private landlords from the market, the SCSI strongly recommends that the Government overhaul and simplify the Residential Tenancies Act to ensure that realistic regulations are in place to govern the sector. The SCSI also advocates for further tax changes to entice smaller landlords to remain in the market, and for further tax relief for renters, given the rental inflation experienced over the last 12 months.

Commercial property: incentivising developers and investors

The Submission outlines several measures, such as no further increases to Stamp Duty, and warns of the added uncertainty created by the proposed introduction of land value sharing in the development land market. The SCSI has called for the development of a land price register and for further consultation on land value sharing.

Environment: promoting sustainability in housing and construction

Ensuring sustainability in housing and construction must remain a top priority. The SCSI recommends funding for retrofit training to address workforce deficiencies. Furthermore, incentivising and promoting the circular economy and biodiversity must be a key consideration in regard to both research investment and tax incentives. As we look towards Budget 2024, the SCSI will continue to advocate on behalf of both members and the public for a more stable, affordable and sustainable sector. I look forward providing further updates on the SCSI's activities in this area in the coming weeks.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Enda McGuane
SCSI President



THE CRISIS OF OUR TIME

THIS EDITION DEMONSTRATES SOME OF THE MANY WAYS IN WHICH SURVEYORS ARE ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE.

Some 40 years ago the UN created an independent organisation to focus on environmental and development problems and solutions called the World Commission on Environment and Development. The purpose was to propose long-term environmental strategies for achieving sustainable development to the year 2000 and beyond. The intention was to respond to the conflict between economic growth and ecological degradation by redefining economic development in terms of sustainability. The Commission was created by Gro Harlem Brundtland, a former prime minister of Norway, and it became known as the Brundtland Commission. The outcome was a 1987 book, *Our Common Future*, which defined sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Climate change, the defining crisis of our time, is the greatest threat to future generations, and sustainability, the theme of this edition of the *Surveyors Journal*, is the response. Sustainability means doing business without negatively impacting on the environment, community or society as a whole. In this edition, readers will learn of the extensive involvement of surveyors in all aspects of sustainability as it affects their work. From this, it is becoming increasingly clear that many surveyors, particularly younger surveyors, are adopting sustainable practices that will drive business and professional success.

In an interesting interview, Ossian Smith, a Green Party TD and Minister of State, points out that a major part of our circular economy that needs to be fixed is the construction sector. He also talks about ambitious changes to the regulations around public procurement, which he says are about trying to make sure that small companies get a fair crack of the whip as well as making procurement support environmental objectives. In her piece on sustainable procurement (page 24), Catriona Riordan says that it is a powerful and necessary tool needed to create a sustainable construction industry. Elsewhere, the chairs of several Professional Groups in the SCSi talk about how they incorporate sustainability into their sectors. Happily, a lot is going on related to sustainability throughout the profession.

EDITORIAL

Tom Dunne
Editor



RECYCLING AND THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Sources: Recycling – <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20221020-1>.
Circular economy – <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/7d25e0bb-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/7d25e0bb-en>

PROPERTY PRICES TO RISE BY 2%

The SCSi's latest Residential Property Market Monitor shows that estate agents expect national property prices to increase by an average of 2% over the next 12 months. The new report features affordability scenarios for Cork, Galway and three Leinster commuter belt counties. According to these scenarios, a couple on a combined salary of €89k, who want to buy a new house and have a 10% deposit, can afford to buy in three of five locations: Cork, Galway and Meath. However, couples will still face shortfalls of over €83,000 in Wicklow and €32,000 in Kildare. In addition to affordability measures, the report also shows that:

- six out of ten agents describe current residential property prices as expensive;
- 43% of agents believe prices are increasing but will level off soon; and,
- 48% believe that credit conditions have deteriorated.

Thank you to all the agents who provided data and completed the survey. It is through your input and our shared property knowledge that these reports are possible.

NEXUS EVENTS



Congratulations to the winning tag rugby team from Hooke & MacDonald and Eagle Street Partners (from left): Sarah Young; John Mallen; Michael Purcell; Jack Doherty; Brian McKenna; Andrew Lawlor; Donald MacDonald; and, Laura Booth.

Nexus, the SCSi's network of young professionals, has enjoyed several networking and sporting events this summer. We were delighted to have 160 surveyors take part in the 2023 Nexus soccer tournament. Congratulations to the team from Cogent Associates on winning this year's tournament.

Several weeks later, 11 member firms were back on the pitch battling it out at the annual tag rugby tournament. Following the match, the



The team from Cogent Associates took the honours at the Nexus soccer tournament. Back row (from left): Janine Burke; Amalita Miranda; Glenn du Preez; Harry Day; and, Darragh Coll. Front row (from left) Gayle Foulds; Leo Wier; Natalie Foulds; and, Brian McKeogh.

teams enjoyed connecting with industry colleagues over a BBQ and evening of entertainment. Congratulations to the team from Hooke & MacDonald, the 2023 tournament winners.

Thank you to our sponsors for the Nexus summer events, including Walls to Workstations (W2W), Hooke & MacDonald and JLL.

To sponsor a Nexus charity or networking event, please contact the events team at events@scsi.ie or visit scsi.ie/nexus.

15 YEARS MAKING WINDOW DISPLAYS DISTINCTIVE

Douglas Displays states that the company has two reasons to celebrate. After 15 years of offering quality products and services, the company is delighted to introduce the next-generation LED display range.

According to the company, the new Claralight LED suspended and freestanding systems are a major advance in property display, offering stylish choice and sustainability with no compromise on quality or display impact. The products also come with a 1Click mounting system for property displays.

Douglas Displays states that like surveyors, the company takes its

environmental impact very seriously, and lists the following sustainable credentials of the Claralight LED lightpocket:

- over 60% of the panel is made from recycled material (by net weight);
- 40% power saving compared to a standard LED lightpocket;
- smaller, slimmer frame uses less raw material; and,
- switching to 24v not only saves power, but also increases LED lifecycle for even more hours of maintenance-free low-energy, 24/7 LED display.

CONSTRUCTION MARKET MONITOR

In June, the SCSi published the 2023 Construction Market Monitor with PwC at a joint launch event at the PwC offices.

The new report shows that while seven out of ten Chartered Surveyors believe the overall outlook for the construction sector is positive, there have been negative pressures on the sector, including:

- rising interest rates mean that development finance is increasingly difficult to source;
- rising inflation and labour supply shortages are putting the viability and affordability of projects under huge pressure;
- due to uncertainties, many companies are not planning to further invest in modern construction methods;
- lack of funding and labour shortages are seen by respondents as major barriers to achieving retrofit targets; and,
- 61% say that their firms are operating at full capacity, with 34% expecting an increase in their firm's headcount.

In response to these findings, the SCSi has highlighted the challenges that increased interest rates pose to development viability, and has

called on the Government to address viability concerns, and to seek to incentivise innovation and digitalisation in the sector.



SCSi President Enda McGuane speaking at the launch event for the SCSi/PwC Construction Market Monitor.

COMPLETE YOUR PSRA CPD HOURS ONLINE


As we look towards the final quarter of 2023, we would like to remind members to ensure that you have completed your five PSRA CPD hours. The SCSi PSRA CPD course is included in SCSi subscriptions for full members. Members can simply log in and complete all five hours online in their own time. Please be sure to fill in your PSRA license number before beginning your lessons to ensure accuracy with your competition certification.

If you have any queries, please contact psracpd@scsi.ie.

RIP FIONA BARRON


We would like to express our deepest condolences to the friends and family of Fiona Barron, particularly her husband, Pat Winters. Fiona worked as Irish Property Facility Management Association (IPFMA) CEO before the merger with the SCSi, when she became the SCSi's Director of Corporate Services. Those who worked with Fiona will recall with fondness her baking and homemade soups, and her superb organisational skill. Fiona had an unfailing commitment to the members. The staff and members were lucky to work with her.








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PARTNERING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

The SCSi recently partnered with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to host the 'Residential Construction Cost from Policy to Practice' event. It was fantastic to have over 160 property and construction professionals join both in person in the newly refurbished member space at Merrion Square, and online.

The event featured a discussion on the recently published Construction Sector Group/Government Residential Construction cost study and follow-up actions. Speakers discussed Irish residential construction costs, processes, models, and comparisons with other European cities.

Thank you to the panel of speakers, including: Claire Solon FSCSI FRICS, Greystar; Paul Mitchell MSCSI MRICS, Mitchell McDermott; Bryn Griffiths MSCSI MRICS, Turner & Townsend; Fergus McMahon FSCSI FRICS, Cairn Homes; and, Rasmus Pedersen, MT Højgaard, Denmark.



Pictured at the recent residential construction costs event were (from left): Sean Armstrong, Department of Housing; Enda McGuane, SCSi President; Fergus McMahon, Cairn Homes; Shirley Coulter, SCSi CEO; Paul Mitchell, Mitchell McDermott; Claire Solon, Greystar; Bryn Griffiths, Turner & Townsend; and, Feargal O'Coigligh, Assistant Secretary, Housing Policy, Legislation and Governance.



FOCUS Housing Association

Derelict or vacant buildings sought

Expression of Interest submissions invited

Focus Housing Association CLG is seeking expressions of interest from developers/builders/property owners with derelict or vacant buildings in town centre locations that can be developed and delivered on a turnkey basis for social housing.

A mixed portfolio comprising of single units in different locations can be considered along with buildings suitable for multi-unit use. Interested parties are requested to complete an Expression of Interest questionnaire at this initial stage.

Questionnaires are available from Focus Housing Association on 01 8815900 or e-mail development@focusireland.ie. The deadline for receipt of applications is 30th September 2023.

For further information on the process please contact the Focus Housing Association development team on 01 - 8815900 or e-mail development@focusireland.ie.



LIONHEART GOLF DAY

Thank you to the 12 teams who took part in the annual LionHeart Golf Day and helped to raise funds to provide supports for surveyors in Ireland.

The teams enjoyed a lovely day of golfing at the Woodbrook Golf Club followed by dinner. Congratulations to the winning team from John Gilmore Auctioneers and Valuers.

We would like to remind members about the many supports and services available to you and your family members through LionHeart. LionHeart offers counselling, back to work support, legal advice, financial grants, and more.

The full list of services is available on our website at www.scsi.ie/lionheart. If you are in need of support, please contact us at lionheart@scsi.ie or 01-223 9446.



Congratulations to the winning golf team from John Gilmore Auctioneers and Valuers. Pictured (from left): John Gilmore; Wesley Gilmore; Emma Gilmore; Martin Hennelly; and, SCSi CEO Shirley Coulter.

WORLD GREEN BUILDING WEEK SUSTAINABILITY CPD SERIES

The SCSi is delighted to once again take part in World Green Building Week. This year the SCSi will be running an online lunchtime sustainability CPD series from September 11-15, providing members with insights and guidance to take steps towards sustainable practice. The Sustainability CPD series events include:

- Monday: Overview of the Energy Performance Building Directive (EPBD);
- Tuesday: Introduction to low-carbon building materials and MMC;
- Wednesday: Green Procurement across the Built Environment Lifecycle;
- Thursday: Valuations and EU Taxonomy; and,
- Friday: Urban Regeneration for Biodiversity and Climate Resilience.

Visit scsi.ie/calendar to register to attend CPDs during #WGBW.

NEW NEXUS CHAIRPERSON

We would like to congratulate Claire McDowell, the newly elected Nexus chairperson. We look forward to a great year of networking, giving back and inspiring the next generation of surveyors.



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UPSKILL WITH THE SCSi THIS AUTUMN

Whether you are getting started in your career or are a seasoned professional, take advantage of great upskilling opportunities with the SCSi this autumn. You can register for a range of upcoming workshops, including:

Boost your business: content marketing workshops

The SCSi's new content marketing workshops, taking place in person on September 14, will provide you with the skills you need to create engaging video and social media content. This course is designed to help you boost your brand, increase your online engagement and get cut-through with your messaging.

Expand your knowledge: accounting, valuation and finance for surveyors

Our upcoming finance workshop series will provide you with key foundational knowledge for understanding business finance and valuation. Members can book to attend individual workshops or the full series.

Upgrade your skill set: soft skills workshops

Our soft skills workshop series will help you grow your technical report



writing and negotiating skills. These online workshops will help members to gain the essential business skills needed to advance in their careers.

Help your team upskill: book a free APC workshop for your company

In the past year the SCSi has partnered with companies and academic courses to provide over 81 workshops designed to inform staff about becoming Chartered and provide support in starting their APC journeys.

Visit scsi.ie/calendar to book our upcoming workshops, or go to scsi.ie/apcworkshop/ to book a free team workshop online.

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- Geospatial Surveying and Digital Construction**
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 - TU415/2 Pg Dip in Collaborative BIM
 - TU415/3 MSc in applied BIM and Management
 - TU174 BSc (Honours) in BIM (Digital Construction).
 - TU058 Pg Cert in Digital Construction Analytics / Engineering Analytics
 - TU5405 CPD Cert in Geographical Information Systems
 - TU089 BSc (Honours) in Geospatial Surveying
 - TU220 MSc Geographic Science (PT)
 - TU268 MSc Geographic Science (FT)
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FILLING THE EDUCATION GAP

NEW SCSi-ACCREDITED COURSES IN SLIGO AND GALWAY WILL HELP TO ADDRESS SKILLS SHORTAGES, AND INCREASE DIVERSITY IN THE PROFESSION.

The recently published SCSi 'Employment, Remuneration and Workplace Report 2023', authored by Dr Róisín Murphy, points to a continued strong demand for surveying professionals across the property, construction and land disciplines. While student numbers registered on SCSi-accredited third-level programmes have significantly increased in recent years, continued progress is required to ensure that future demand can be met and maintained. This is particularly vital in the context of the industry's capacity to deliver on vital key projects such as the National Development Plan, Housing for All, and the Climate Action Plan, in addition to normal activity within the sector.

Shortages predicted

In examining potential shortages, Dr Murphy conducted an online survey whereby estimates of future employment demand across every level of experience were provided based on three possible scenarios of economic growth as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP): 4% per annum; 3% per annum; and, 2% per annum. Future supply was estimated using current enrolment on SCSi-accredited surveying programmes nationwide. Under an optimistic scenario of economic growth, the data indicated a significant shortage of property surveyors, with demand over twice the level of supply. In the median scenario, a shortage of property surveyors is still likely to occur. Similarly, based on the data collected, a shortage of land surveyors is predicted in both the optimistic and median scenarios of economic growth. The shortage under the optimistic scenario is particularly concerning, with over twice the number of land surveyors required compared to likely throughput from the third-level sector.

SCSi-accredited programmes

The SCSi has recently accredited programmes in property and facilities

management in Atlantic Technological University Sligo (ATU Sligo), and in planning and development in University of Galway. This is good news both for the region and for the industry nationally, as graduates from these programmes will help to address the anticipated continued skills shortages in the property and land disciplines.

Sligo

ATU Sligo's Level 8 BSc (Hons) in Facilities and Building Services Management and Level 8 BSc (Hons) in Real Estate Development and Valuation were recently accredited by the SCSi. These courses were developed in a collaboration between ATU Sligo and the SCSi, and offer progression for students on ATU Sligo's existing Level 6 Higher Certificate in Property Services and Facilities Management, building skills in this area and providing increased career opportunities. Just under 70 students have already completed the Higher Certificate programme, and it is expected that this number will increase to almost 100 during 2023.

These new courses will provide students with a route to continued study and potentially to Chartered Membership of the SCSi. In a constantly evolving industry, graduates will be equipped to meet present and future needs and challenges in the property and facilities management sectors, exploring areas such as valuation, management, estate agency, property development, property investment, planning, and facility management. These study options will be open to students nationally as the programmes will be delivered online in a flexible format aimed at those working full time in the industry, with both live online and on-demand material supporting students on the course. Innovative online delivery not only helps as part of the picture to address the skills shortage by providing a nationally available curriculum, but also allows for a greater diversity of entrants to the industry as those who may not have access to education opportunities in their locale or who may be unable to travel for study can complete a course from their home, office or anywhere with a good internet connection.

The facilities management industry is seeing a rapid growth in professionalism, and is now estimated to be valued at well over €1.5bn in Ireland alone, leading to an increased need for professional recognition for facilities management professionals, particularly as they were at the

NEWS FEATURE

James Lonergan
Director of Education
and CPD, SCSi



forefront of the recent Covid-19 response in business. The ATU Sligo Facilities Management course is the first facilities management course in the country to be accredited by the SCSi, providing professional recognition through a route to Chartered Membership for a growing profession that heretofore did not have a straightforward route to Charter.

Galway

The University of Galway's MA (Rural Futures Planning and Innovation) is the SCSi's most recently accredited third-level course and the first programme in University of Galway to be accredited by the SCSi. The programme aims to address a gap in rural specialist knowledge and training that can identify future planning needs and challenges, and respond in a critical and reflexive way.

Rural communities are rapidly changing and evolving, as are the processes and trends that shape them. This programme focuses on how planning and innovation can contribute to the future of rural areas by exploring how professionals can strategically plan for rural change, and how they might aim for alternative, desirable future rural developments based on innovation and the promotion of a sustainable rural future. The programme aims to produce graduates who are

aware of the complexities of rural issues, the associated innovation and planning processes, and the implications for sustainable development at the level of the local place as well as at national and international scales. Those graduating from the course will be equipped to pursue Chartered status through the Planning and Development Pathway, providing a range of career opportunities with contractors, sub-contractors, local authorities, Government departments, or as a consultant in a private practice.

Find out more

These new study options in ATU Sligo and University of Galway bring the total number of courses accredited by SCSi to 28 in eight academic partner universities nationally, providing a range of full-time and part-time study options in the property, land, and construction disciplines.

For information on these and other courses accredited by the SCSi, contact James Lonergan at james@scsi.ie or the Education team at education@scsi.ie.

To explore study options in ATU Sligo, visit <https://www.atu.ie/course-list-for-atu-sligo>. To explore courses in University of Galway, see <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/>.



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PUBLIC WORKS



MINISTER OSSIAN SMYTH TD TALKS TO THE *SURVEYORS JOURNAL* ABOUT HIS ROLE IN PROMOTING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY, AND AMBITIOUS CHANGES TO THE REGULATIONS AROUND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT.

In his previous life as a software engineer, Ossian Smyth TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Public Procurement, eGovernment and Circular Economy, saw his role as one of identifying problems and then designing and implementing solutions. His interests lay, however, in the larger problems affecting the world, and this led to his decision to enter politics: "It's trying to make the world a better place by fixing things that are causing people unhappiness. That's a very fulfilling and meaningful job compared to making bug fixes on software, which maybe nobody will ever notice. I can cycle on the cycle lane that I asked for, got designs and got the money for. I can see the changes happening around me".

The Minister's role straddles two Government Departments – Environment and Public Expenditure and Reform – and covers a wide remit that includes procurement, eGovernment, circular economy and public sector building efficiency. He's cognisant of the advantages of this: "I've got a foot in both camps: the spending money for the Budget and helping the environment. Those different things overlap so that, for example, I can make sure that there are environmental considerations in procurement".

One of many projects the Minister has responsibility for is the National Broadband Scheme, the largest capital project in the State: "That project had a very rocky start, but now it's ahead of

target and we're building out 8,000 fibre-connected homes a month. The budget for that is €2.6 billion, but I'm hoping to complete it well under that".

A new deposit return scheme for bottles and cans will also be rolled out next February, and the Minister says he's lucky to be involved in schemes with such broad and positive applications.

Changes in procurement

Minister Smyth is no doubt fortunate that his tenure coincides with an era of huge capital spending by the State on a range of infrastructural projects, from broadband, to road and rail networks, to housing. However, he's very aware of the responsibility of getting it right in terms of procurement: "My focus has been about trying to make sure that small companies in Ireland get a fair crack of the whip. It's also about making sure procurement is supporting environmental objectives and

INTERVIEW

Ann-Marie Hardiman
Managing Editor,
Think Media Ltd



CERTAINLY STAFF TRAINING IS GOING TO BE ONE OF THE CHALLENGES. THE NEXT ONE IS WHATEVER HARDWARE OR SOFTWARE THAT YOU NEED IN YOUR ORGANISATION TO MANAGE IT.

that it is supporting the National Development Plan. There's €116 billion in that budget, so it's important that we're doing it right".

To this end, major changes are afoot in public procurement. Minister Smyth recently joined his colleague, Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform, Paschal Donohoe TD, to announce updates to the Capital Works Management Framework (CWMF). While many of these changes are designed to address construction cost inflation and provide greater certainty with respect to risk in public projects, two in particular seek to embed sustainability in Government procurement, while increasing efficiency and use of modern technology.

Firstly, the use of the International Cost Management Standard (ICMS) will be mandatory for projects under the CWMF, once templates are published. Secondly, from January 2024, building information modelling (BIM) will be a mandatory part of the design element for higher-value projects (over €100m), with a four-year timeline to its introduction across both design and contractor and supply elements of all projects. Minister Smyth explains that the ICMS will replace the National Standard of Building Elements (NSBE), which, at over 30 years old, is badly in need of revision to reflect modern requirements. For example, the ICMS will measure embodied carbon, which is central to meeting our climate commitments: "We're at a stage now where new buildings have really high energy standards. The next step is how much carbon is embodied in the building materials, things like steel and glass and concrete. We need ways to track that, and ICMS provides that. We will be able to better evaluate a project's sustainability, and then monitor it during and after construction. It's the whole lifecycle of the building and not just the idea that once it's built, that's the end of it".

As an international standard, use of the ICMS will also enable reporting that can be compared with other countries, and simplify compliance with EU sustainability legislation.

The phased introduction of BIM is also about increasing efficiency and accuracy, and measuring sustainability: "If you think of a megaproject, something over €100 million – you want to make sure that people are working from a common spec., and you want a really rich level of detail to reduce the chance of misunderstanding and miscommunication. It is obviously a better situation if there is an

agreed digital version of the building, and it's really needed in order to measure embodied carbon".

Implementation

The Minister expects that cost reporting templates for the ICMS will be published this month by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP). These will be updated next year to include embodied carbon, and then again in 2025 to include lifecycle analysis. Training and information will be available both for prospective tenderers, and for purchasers within Government Departments and State bodies, through the OGP and professional organisations like the SCSi. Indeed, the SCSi has been part of a working group, along with other professional bodies, to compile training programmes in conjunction with the OGP.

For BIM, Minister Smyth says that guidance will be published this year, which will specify the level of BIM required for projects, and a timeline is already available for the phases of its introduction. As with the ICMS, the Government is collaborating with stakeholders, including professional bodies, to develop information and training on each phase of the process.

Massive change like this doesn't come without its challenges, and the Minister identifies two in particular: "Certainly staff training is going to be one of the challenges. The next one is whatever hardware or software that you need in your organisation to manage it. That's why we've gone with very large projects first [for BIM], because we expect the larger contractors are the ones who probably are already doing BIM, who already have some capacity for it. We don't want to come in too hard and too fast on the smaller players".

Supporting small business

Public tenders are a notoriously complex process, requiring a considerable input of resources for a tender that may ultimately be unsuccessful. This can be particularly onerous on smaller firms. However, as mentioned earlier, one of Minister Smyth's priorities is to level the playing field in this regard: "We want to make sure that our Government spend is not all going to large international firms, but also that we're getting the flexibility and innovation that comes from going with smaller companies".

The Minister regularly meets with small business representatives, and one result of this has been a redrafting of the Government circular on procurement, which provides guidance to purchasing bodies, so that the needs of small businesses are taken into account. While the Government must of course work within European procurement law, some examples of the changes include raising the national advertising threshold for contracts for goods and services to €50,000, and encouraging purchasers to be flexible in the turnover and insurance requirements attached to tenders.

Minister Smyth also wants to encourage smaller firms to think outside the box when it comes to procurement: "A lot of the changes that are happening in construction procurement that relate to monitoring, embodied carbon measurement and BIM and so on require specialist

skills. I think there is certainly an opportunity for small companies, if they see a tender and they see that there are skills required in it that they could supply, that they ally with a larger company, or win the tender as part of a joint venture”.

He also points out that the perceptions regarding public tendering may not be entirely accurate: “When I’m looking at the analysis of who’s winning public procurement contracts, most of the business is going to small businesses, and most of it is going to Irish businesses. However, our average number of bidders per contract is low, something like two bidders per contract. At the moment, if you take part in a public procurement competition, you’ve got a high chance of winning”.

The Minister says that staff at the OGP are there to help with any queries about the tendering and procurement processes. The Construction Procurement Policy Unit helpdesk can be reached at construction@per.gov.ie.

While changes to the guidelines for purchasing bodies are very welcome, the SCSi has also previously raised the need for appropriate staffing and training in public bodies. This is especially true in the area of housing, where local authorities are now increasing their direct involvement in the provision of social and affordable homes. Minister Smyth says that these resources will be made available where needed: “If the Department of Housing, which runs local Government, comes into my department looking for extra staff, we will, of course, supply them with the budget for that”.

Key messages

Returning to the core issue of sustainability, the Minister has a strong message for surveyors in relation to the circular economy: “The major part of our circular economy that we need to fix is the construction sector. We have much less circularity in construction than other European countries have. We have a system whereby we have a lot of quarries in Ireland with a great resource of aggregates, and there’s a tendency just to demolish buildings, dig out the clay, make a hole on your site and then ship it all out to landfill, and then get trucks from the quarry to bring up all the raw materials. That’s going to have to change. We need to make sure that our construction demolition waste is segregated and

OUR AVERAGE NUMBER OF BIDDERS PER CONTRACT IS LOW ... AT THE MOMENT, IF YOU TAKE PART IN A PUBLIC PROCUREMENT COMPETITION, YOU’VE GOT A HIGH CHANCE OF WINNING.



The world on two wheels

Ossian Smyth is a graduate in computer science of Trinity College Dublin, and prior to entering politics he worked as an IT/business consultant. In 2014, he was elected as a Green Party Councillor to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, and served as Cathaoirleach of the Council between 2018 and 2019. He was elected to Dáil Éireann in 2020, representing Dún Laoghaire.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Ossian’s favourite way to relax is on his bike, and he makes great use of the new cycling infrastructure in his constituency: “I can fit it in during the day because around the city it’s probably faster than any other transport, and it keeps me awake and gives me energy. I’m planning this summer to go and ride a bike down some greenways and stop in the pubs along the way and that kind of stuff. So not competition cycling or sports cycling or speed cycling: relaxed on a bike, pedalling along, is my favourite way to see the world”.

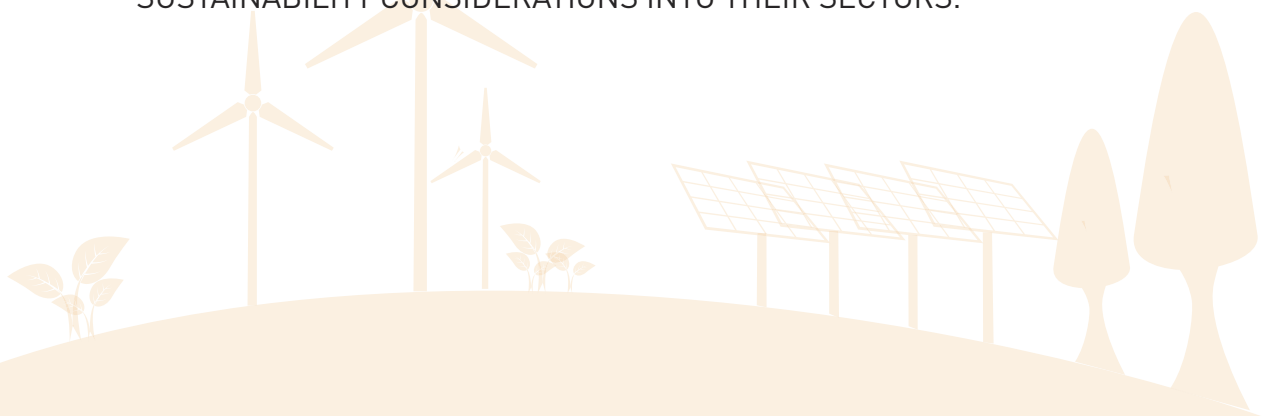
sorted, kept in hubs in the cities and then reused on neighbouring projects. And we need to make sure that we’re doing less landfilling and less quarrying, and more sorting and reuse”.

He acknowledges that more needs to be done to assist companies who are anxious to move to more sustainable methods: “I need to improve the EPA’s licensing system and I’m rewriting the laws on that, which is going to happen in tandem with the rewrite of the planning laws, so that there will be a single application process whereby you get your planning permission and your EPA licences at the same time”.

Another key message is to reiterate that there are many opportunities, particularly for small specialist companies, in our green revolution: “In the Grangegorman development, a small quantity surveying firm provided all the embodied carbon measurement and consultancy service. That is going to be a lucrative and a growth area. People will need to follow these regulations, and they’re going to be willing to pay for advice”. Finally, he wants to hear from surveyors: “The best things I’ve ever done have all been suggestions from the public, so informed members of the public, which surveyors are, if they’ve got any suggestions for me, I’d love to hear them”.

THE ROAD TO SUSTAINABILITY

IN A TIME THAT DEMANDS INCREASED SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CLIMATE CONSCIOUSNESS, IT'S INCREASINGLY IMPERATIVE THAT WE EXAMINE OUR LIFESTYLES, INDUSTRIES, AND PRACTICES THROUGH THE LENS OF SUSTAINABILITY. THE *SURVEYORS JOURNAL* SPOKE TO THE CHAIRS OF SEVERAL PROFESSIONAL GROUPS IN THE SCSi ABOUT HOW THEY INCORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS INTO THEIR SECTORS.



Emer Byrne

Chairperson, Sustainability Working Group

Emer recognises that sustainability is very much part of the way we do business now. New pieces of EU legislation aim to make us accountable and compliant across all industries and particularly in the built environment, which accounts for a significant percentage of carbon emissions nationally and globally.

In terms of the SCSi's involvement with sustainability, Emer notes that all the new information coming in might be daunting to surveyors who are trying to grasp the changes and integrate them into their practices. One of the Working Group's main objectives in any year is education, and highlighting relevant information for the members of Professional Groups (PGs) and the Society at large.

The Sustainability Working Group's remit is also to pinpoint sustainability-related issues that are relevant to the profession generally. To support the direction and information on this, the Working Group and the SCSi

commissioned a report on sustainability in 2022 for the surveying profession, authored by Dr Róisín Murphy. This report set out research detailing the stage the profession is at in terms of sustainability, and established targets and goals for the SCSi for the following five years. This has been very influential in addressing the challenges around implementing sustainable practices and changing the way we think about surveying for a better, more sustainable future.

The next phase for the built environment sector is challenging. With 95% of our building stock already constructed, the focus for the industry will be on this segment of the market. With the cost of retrofitting and the gap in general sustainability knowledge, the pace of progress needs to be accelerated to meet our 2030 targets.

Another key challenge is biodiversity. Emer says the recommendations of the recent Citizen's Assembly report on biodiversity give a great model and set of guidelines to adopt, which is exactly what is needed for the profession.

On the road to sustainability, Emer recognises the overwhelming pace of change that each PG is faced with, but believes that if targets are centred around real data, transparent information and accountability by the stakeholders, the goals can be achieved. She expresses huge faith in all members of the SCSi for their professionalism, integrity and strong work ethic. She believes that everyone is committed to and engaged in moving the dial as efficiently as possible towards achieving zero carbon.

FEATURE

Rebecca Pollard
Journalist and sub-editor
Think Media Ltd





Fergus Gallagher

Chairperson, Minerals Professional Group

Fergus and the Minerals PG are concerned about the lack of awareness regarding the provision of aggregates for the construction industry. He notes that aggregates are a wasting asset and that their consumption necessitates a constant replacement supply. This becomes an issue for sustainability, as aggregates are low-value, bulk materials that must be produced close to the intended market to reduce haulage cost and minimise haulage pollution levels. Fergus and the Group have first-hand experience of the aggregates planning process and are frustrated by the lack of national policy regarding the provision of aggregates. In certain counties, there is no apparent recognition of the need for aggregates. New quarry developments are being refused planning permission on very minor issues and having to go through long appeal processes, with the ever-present threat of judicial reviews.

The provision of one-off housing is sterilising large tracts of aggregates, without any regard for their importance. In addition, there have been long delays providing the mechanisms to comply with European Directives associated with waste and the end-of-waste criteria necessary to turn waste construction material into recycled aggregates.

While the end-of-waste criteria to be issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is welcomed, the Group remains concerned, as it will not be possible to recycle construction waste into aggregates suitable for high-end concrete.

As with other sectors, the construction raw materials supply industry is experiencing undue delays in obtaining licences and consents. Currently, it is taking around six years to gain consents for waste recovery facilities to produce recycled aggregates. The strategic infrastructure process through An Bord Pleanála, coupled with end-to-end waste licensing processes through the EPA, needs to be streamlined.

A solution to the aggregate supply issues lies with marine aggregates. Large deposits of sand and gravel are known to be present off the east coast of Ireland, which could increase supply. It is known that ships consume less fuel per unit of cargo compared to road haulage and have the potential to deliver aggregates directly into the major markets.

Fergus is liaising with the Irish Concrete Federation, which is currently working to build on its 2018 publication, 'Essential Aggregates', using evidence-based material to support a call for the recognition that the provision of aggregates is essential. It is anticipated that the updated publication will be presented as continuing professional development (CPD) for the SCSi in due course.

BUILDING SURVEYORS NEED TO BE LEADERS IN TRANSLATING SUSTAINABILITY, WORKING IT THROUGH EACH JOB, COMMUNICATING TO CLIENTS, AND GIVING THEM ADVICE.



Peter Murtagh

Chairperson, Rural Agency Professional Group

Peter Murtagh and the Rural Agency Group keep in close contact with the farming community, where the main conversations around sustainability feature the Nitrates Directive, promoting biodiversity, and reducing our carbon footprint. Another important discussion is around rewetting and rewilding. This practice is important for returning the environment to nature, to allow natural and sustainable practices, such as carbon sinking in bogs, to begin again. The problem here is that this idea is welcomed by some farmers and not welcomed by others. A win for some landowners might have a totally different unintended consequence for others. Another initiative that has come up in discussions is in relation to rural housing and our approach to it. Peter and the group are forming the view to support rural clustering where possible, which satisfies criteria for economic viability, environmental protection and social equity. In smaller ways, Peter suggests that householders and building owners can contribute to sustainability in positive ways by creating open spaces and natural habitats in their gardens to foster and encourage wildlife in the hedgerows around their properties.



Brigid Browne

Chairperson, Building Surveying Professional Group

In terms of sustainability, a lot of building surveyors are trying to promote the use of existing building stock. Since the publication of the SCSi's 'Real Cost of Renovation Report', the repurposing of vacant buildings has been a priority. Brigid believes that proper education on sustainability is important, and so working closely with the Sustainability Working Group is really valuable for the information they carry back to each group. Brigid notes that in order to get the most out of sustainability in terms of building surveying, it needs to be translated down into building surveying terms, such as through the explanation of building regulations in a more practical and approachable way. Brigid believes that building surveyors need to be the leaders in translating sustainability to others, working it through each job, communicating to clients what is required, and giving them the best advice.

Brigid thanks the Sustainability Working Group for taking the lead on sustainability, and for all the hard work they do that benefits the Society and its members. Brigid believes that because the SCSi encapsulates the entire land, property and construction sectors, working together in this way will only have positive results in terms of sustainability, especially when you consider the SCSi's strong link with the Government, where it acts as an advisory body, contributing to the development of legislation, and acting as a trusted society that offers advice to the Government.



Elaine Torpey

Chairperson, Valuations Professional Group

Elaine mentions that one of the valuation sector's main issues is how much sustainability and environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards affect value, and the impact of these working transitions on the policy and legislation involved in valuing. All of this needs to be considered when trying to understand if a property must be retrofitted immediately or be made more sustainable by the 2030 mark. In this way, valuers should have a working knowledge of sustainability and how it affects value. Sustainability is a key factor in that it is intrinsically linked with the market success of a property, whereby newer stock will command higher rents and capital values. Valuers and others involved in the process must be aware of a property's sustainable performance, relative to comparable properties. This process of comparing might include measuring things like energy efficiency and carbon emissions, which may not be measurable in older buildings. Increasingly, it will be seen that properties with low BER ratings may be difficult to sell and the price may be reduced to reflect the capital expenditure required to increase the rating. An increasing number of companies in the marketplace will seek properties for acquisition or occupation purposes with a minimum B2 rating. Banks are starting to adopt a similar approach of minimum BER requirements, which will have an effect on the availability of finance and the funding rates applicable. This has the potential to create a two-tier market between older and newer stock. As a group, valuers must adopt the latest guidance notes and regulation changes, which include those in the



sustainability category. Elaine brings attention to the Government's Climate Action Plan, which proposes to have 500,000 existing homes upgraded to a B2 BER rating, a reduction of 30% in carbon emissions from the public sector, and an increase of energy efficiency in public sector buildings by 50%, all by 2030.

In such wise, Elaine considers that her PG needs to rise to the long-term challenges of sustainability and the impact it will have on the property market in their approach to valuations.

Katie McGale



Chairperson, Arts and Antiques Professional Group

In Katie McGale's view, arts and antiques is an inherently sustainable area due to its nature in dealing with second-hand items, but that does not negate all of the challenges regarding sustainability in this sector. Katie mentions that due to the kind of membership base that exists in the Group, which is made up of an older generation of professionals, there is a lack of awareness or outreach to the younger generation.

Another issue faced in the Group is one of public perception of antiques, in that people do not want to pay a lot of money for something that is second hand, which presents problems for costings of high-value antiques. Katie and the Group are looking forward to the power of the internet in the work of arts and antiques surveyors. Since the pandemic, auction houses have moved their bidding platforms online.

This has positive implications for sustainability due to the smaller spaces now needed in order to work: warehouses can also be located further outside the city in less congested areas, and can be reached without creating too much traffic and pollution. In this way, putting bidding online is the key to a lot of solutions in terms of sustainability for this business.

Similarly, with people getting used to having information on their phone or computer, they've been able to cut down on the use of paper. Putting advertising online also cuts down on printing waste.

Katie's next line of focus for her PG is to lobby for CPD programmes that are more relevant to arts and antiques, and that address these issues. Some suggestions include CPD courses in online bidding and selling online, as well as courses in social media.



Arlene Maguire

Chairperson, Commercial Agency Professional Group

Arlene Maguire says that the members of the Commercial Agency Group recognise that sustainability flows through every aspect of managing, selling, leasing and developing the built environment. Three main concerns for the group are around: how existing buildings will be brought up to standard to meet sustainability criteria and what will be the financial and carbon costs involved; worries around the brown and green lease/pricing divergence and how we factor it in to pricing and future-proofing stock; and, concerns around data collection for leasing/transactions to meet funds and occupier requirements in ESG, BREEAM and near zero energy building (NZEB) compliance. In terms of keeping sustainability on the priority list, Arlene works to keep members informed of the real-world effects of NZEB or BREEAM requirements on leasing, funder requirements and lease drafting. She also informs the group on updates regarding building regulations and how these tie back into sustainability, with help from group members like Brian Meldon, who is also on the Green Leases Committee. In terms of what comes next, Arlene advises that the requirements for landlords to accommodate and provide for tenants' ESG requirements will become more influential in a tenants' occupancy and decision-making. Landlords will need to start factoring in carbon reduction initiatives to future costs and sinking funds, and the penalty for brown buildings will become more stark as carbon reduction targets for occupiers become linked to company performance targets. Arlene also believes that building performance will become a feature of 'heads of terms' and contracts.

VALUERS AND OTHERS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS MUST BE AWARE OF A PROPERTY'S SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE, RELATIVE TO COMPARABLE PROPERTIES.

LANDLORDS WILL NEED TO START FACTORING IN CARBON REDUCTION INITIATIVES TO FUTURE COSTS AND SINKING FUNDS.



Donal Hennessy

Chairperson, Quantity Surveying Professional Group

For Donal Hennessy, the Quantity Surveying Group and the construction sector as a whole, the key issues involve sustainable building design and materials, energy-efficient construction, reducing waste and emissions during construction, and promoting green infrastructure development. The SCSi, through its work with the Government's Construction Sector Group and Construct Innovate, is developing new practices and procedures to reduce overall carbon emissions and improve waste reduction in the sector. On the residential front, the National Residential Retrofit Plan, which was announced as part of the Climate Action Plan, outlines how the Government will retrofit 500,000 homes to a Building Energy Rating of B2/cost optimal or carbon equivalent by 2030. Although the target is very ambitious and actual retrofit numbers are well behind what needs to be completed each year, SCSi research has identified that availability of finance/lack of sufficient grant funding are negatively impacting the ability to achieve this target. Construction surveyors are reporting that labour supply shortages are negatively impacting on projects. The industry is finding it hard to acquire skilled labour, particularly specialist skilled trades in sustainable technology.

It is positive to see policymakers and State agencies increasing awareness around environmental and social issues, which will drive the demand for sustainable practices and solutions. Advancements in technology that enable more efficient and sustainable processes in various sectors will help the industry achieve carbon reduction targets. Building information modelling (BIM) is a key enabler in the drive to net-zero carbon construction projects. It has the potential to transform the design, construction and management of construction projects, and the operation and maintenance of the asset after completion. The Office of Government Procurement's recent announcement in setting BIM requirements for public sector consultancy engagements is another example of progress. The International Cost Management Standard (ICMS), of which the SCSi is the national advocate for the global coalition, provides a common reporting framework for construction costs and carbon emissions to be explored, and this will be mandated for new public projects from next year.

The evolving nature of regulations and policies that prioritise

sustainability and hold organisations accountable is likely to continue. There are growing consumer expectations for sustainable products and services, and this is driving and influencing the business practices of clients and therefore impacting on the profession and the Quantity Surveying PG.



Philip Matthews

Chairperson, Project Management Professional Group

The work of the Project Management Group involves providing knowledge and support to clients to assist with strategy, programme, and project set-up and delivery, including sustainable practices at every stage, from inception right through to project close-out. If sustainability practices are implemented from the beginning and included in detail as part of a brief, confusion between different industry professionals would be dismantled.

Philip mentions that we must also try to avoid value engineering sustainability out. At the moment, there are aspects to adopting sustainability that are adding cost to projects, but in the long term, those costs will come down. In this way, it is important to keep sustainability running through the project from the pre-contract stage right through to construction.

Philip is positive about the changes that will come with sustainability, in that it will increase opportunities across the real estate space and infrastructure projects. However, he worries about the Government's delivery of tenders for net-zero projects and hopes to see that happen at a faster pace.



Martin Waldron

Chairperson, Dispute Resolution Professional Group

Martin Waldron, who leads the Dispute Resolution Group within the SCSi, has identified excessive paper consumption and unnecessary business travel as the most substantial sustainability issues within his field.

His group and the sector have made commendable progress in reducing these environmental impacts. They have primarily achieved this by using digital documents in lieu of physical documents. A remaining challenge lies in persuading an older generation of



professionals who are used to dealing with paper to transition towards digital operations. This is a challenge that applies equally to some of the large established legal firms.

A rare welcome benefit of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the move from in-person meetings to meetings online. In almost all areas of dispute resolution there has been a shift to online meetings. In addition, it is now rare for overseas experts to fly into the country for consultations. This has undoubtedly led to a significant reduction in carbon emissions from the sector.

Despite the environmental benefits, the rise of online meetings presents some social and personal challenges. The isolation resulting from a lack of in-person interaction, absence of travel downtime, and missing out on post-meeting discussions are real issues. This applies equally for CPD events and conferences. These have always been important platforms for promoting oneself and establishing connections, especially for newcomers in the field. There needs to be a balance between in-person and online meetings to address these real issues. The Group has factored this into its event planning, incorporating a blend of both online and in-person gatherings.

While the sector has made substantial strides towards sustainability, Martin notes that it is crucial to maintain a balance to ensure good mental health and access into the market for new entrants.



Paul Moran

Chairperson, Geomatics Professional Group

Paul Moran and the Geomatics Group believe that one of the main environmental issues in their sector is the constant transport to and from sites. Paul notes that the Group is looking at ways to reduce its carbon footprint, for example by using electric vehicles and reducing travel where possible by using geospatial data, which may suffice instead of a site visit. However, geomatic tools and technology can be cost prohibitive, so ensuring the accessibility of these resources is crucial for sustainable development.

The members of the Geomatics Group play a crucial role in promoting sustainability through various activities that focus on efficient land use, resource management, and environmental conservation. Geomatics, which involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of geospatial data, is a valuable tool for understanding sustainability

challenges, particularly natural resource management, urban planning and smart growth, and renewable energy planning.

Additionally, within the education space, surveyors, students and the 5*5 school's programme, teach Transition Year students about the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how satellite data can be used by Chartered Geomatics Surveyors to monitor and solve issues related to the SDGs.

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning in geomatics and across the SCSi will revolutionise data analysis and interpretation. AI algorithms can process vast amounts of geospatial data to identify patterns, detect anomalies, and predict environmental changes, thus enhancing sustainability efforts. These developments will also accelerate the use of digital twin technology, enabling more effective simulations and scenario planning for sustainable urban development and infrastructure management.





FUTUREPROOFING VALUE

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT IN VALUATIONS.

Sustainability considerations continue to grow exponentially in significance across the commercial property sector. The focus has broadened from primarily new construction, and the requirement to achieve LEED, BREEAM, Fitwell, WiredScore and other sustainability benchmarks, and is now a key factor for older buildings too in terms of capital value, rental value and overall marketability and demand. When it comes to assessing the impact of a building's sustainability credentials on value, various factors come into play. As is usually the case with valuations, it is often a combination of nuanced factors that an experienced valuer with comprehensive and up-to-date market knowledge will be aware of, rather than a textbook or formula-based adjustment.

Building Energy Ratings

For older stock, the standard sustainability benchmark is the Building Energy Rating (BER) Certificate. BERs were introduced as a requirement for all new developments at planning stage in 2007 and subsequently for all sales and lettings in 2009. At that time, obtaining a BER Cert. was predominantly a 'tick-box' exercise, and often little or no attention was paid to the actual rating. This has changed enormously, and now very close attention is paid to the BER Cert., with certain organisations, including State bodies, having very strict requirements in terms of minimum BER ratings for the space they can occupy.

Such strict BER rating requirements and the growing focus on, and preference for, sustainable buildings in general, will impact on the pool of potential investors and tenants, and therefore the level of competition for a building in the market.

We have seen several examples in practice where landlords are commissioning new BER assessments where there is a possibility that a higher rating can be achieved.

In one large mixed-use development we valued recently, the original BER ratings were predominantly 'G' ratings, which did not tally with

FEATURE

Ken Noble
TWM Property



CARE NEEDS TO BE TAKEN THAT ANY FIT-OUT OR OTHER WORKS BEING CARRIED OUT BY A TENANT DO NOT HARM THE BUILDING'S BER RATING OR OTHER SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS.

the age and specification of the building. Revised BER assessments were carried out, with full details and specifications provided to the new assessor, and the ratings improved from the 'G' level up to mainly 'B1' and 'B2' ratings. No capital expenditure was needed for this vast improvement. The original assessments had been carried out without the required level of detail around the exact specification and plant, etc., and the original assessor, therefore, defaulted to the lowest possible rating.

In this instance, the vastly improved BER ratings led to an increase in value, as assumed marketing, void periods, capital expenditure, and the likelihood of break options being triggered were all reduced, thus decreasing the risk to cash flow.

Care needs to be taken that any fit-out or other works being carried out by a tenant do not harm the building's BER rating or other sustainability credentials.

Another example we have seen is a situation where some non-structural, cosmetic-type works carried out by a tenant, including the removal of some internal landscaping, resulted in the BER falling several ratings. While the tenant was obliged to reinstate the building to the original specification at lease end, these works impacted on certain investors' minimum criteria when they were assessing the asset at the time of the proposed sale mid-lease term. In several recent new leases that we have been asked to review and advise on, we have recommended that these leases clearly provide that tenants must not carry out any work that will adversely affect a building's BER rating at any stage during the lease. Such provisions protect the value of the asset.

Improving building performance

Increasingly, tenants will have their own environmental, social and governance (ESG) targets, and will also need to collate data such as energy consumption, waste/recycling data, water usage, etc., for the buildings they occupy. In order to ensure that this information is provided to and by landlords and tenants, we are now frequently seeing an obligation in leases on landlords and tenants to share such information and sometimes to agree to co-operate on any initiatives to improve a building's performance.

Green leases have been around for some time now, and the publication of standardised green lease clauses as part of the Chancery Lane Project in January is an important step towards placing clear and consistent obligations around sustainability on landlords and tenants under new leases. Again, the presence of such provisions makes the increasingly necessary BER, sustainability assessments and annual benchmarking more certain. Certainty reduces risk, and such provisions will appeal to investors who need this data for their own sustainability reporting and assessment needs.

Works to improve a building's BER rating, which can include mechanical and electrical (M&E) upgrades, insulation, installation of LED lighting, and new glazing, may not materially affect the rent achievable to a significant degree, especially if the works are not visible. However, such works will place the property well in the market and ensure that it features on prospective tenant tours.

Given the volatility in the market overall at present, it would be very difficult to make arguments around the exact impact on voids, rents and rent frees, as there are clearly other drivers, but it is probably safe to say that in the absence of undertaking such works viewing activity would be quieter, which means a longer marketing period/rent void, which will adversely affect value.

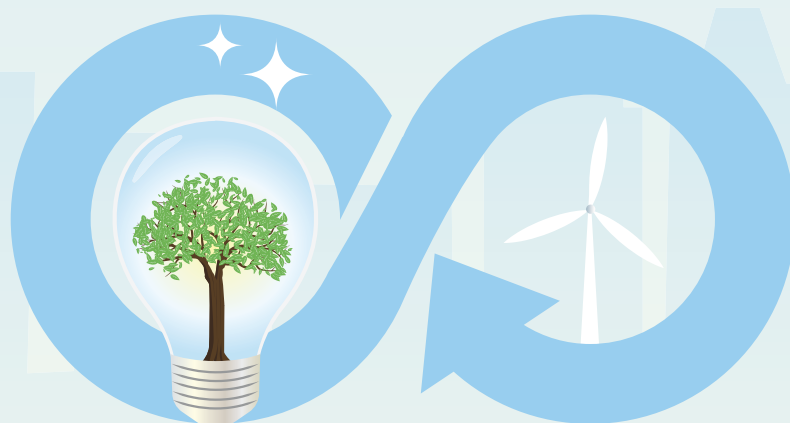
Similarly, this will also affect value when allowing for break options during the holding period. If works have been carried out to improve a building's services and BER rating, the assumed letting void period and also the need for further capital expenditure to bring a building up to a more modern specification will both be reduced, which therefore increases value.

These new market dynamics open opportunities for different categories of property owners. Those who may not be in a position expertise wise or cost wise to carry out such upgrade works may choose to trade a building needing work for a new or retrofitted building.

Those with the necessary expertise and available finance may find opportunity in acquiring older buildings needing upgrade works and bringing these up to the required improved standard, thus enhancing the value of their asset.

THE POWER OF SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE PROCUREMENT OF PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS IS A POWERFUL AND NECESSARY TOOL IN CREATING A SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.



Ireland has committed to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, and has made a legally binding commitment to be net zero carbon by 2050, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030. Globally, the buildings and construction sector is responsible for:

- more than one-third of energy consumption;
- nearly 40% of carbon emissions;
- an estimated one-third of the world's waste; and,
- nearly 30% of biodiversity loss.

The construction industry has significant potential to transition to a sustainable industry, and to deliver sustainable benefits for our cities and communities, our natural environment, and our economy. Turning words into action to achieve Ireland's commitments and enable a more sustainable future is a significant undertaking, and requires participation and collaboration from everyone.

FEATURE

Catriona Riordan
Director & Sustainable
Procurement Lead
Turner and Townsend



Generating positive change

The power to generate the greatest positive change lies in the earliest stages of the programme and project lifecycle, specifically where key decisions shape the remainder of the lifecycle. It is essential that, from the outset, sustainability objectives and targets are defined and agreed by the client organisation. For example, the "needs" phase provides the greatest opportunity to reduce carbon emissions (**Figure 1**).

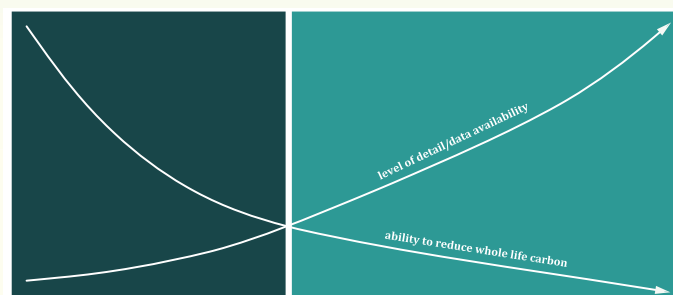


FIGURE 1: The needs phase provides the greatest opportunity to reduce carbon emissions. Source: PAS 2080: 2023 – Carbon management in buildings and infrastructure guidance document.¹

Established cultures, behaviours, and practices present barriers to change in the industry, but with sustainability now rising up the agenda, increased focus on a sustainable and net zero carbon future is emerging. Traditionally, procurement has been dominated by the priorities of cost, quality, and programme, whereas now, sustainability (or green criteria) is featuring and, in some instances, is mandatory for procurement using public funds.²

Industry leaders, particularly in client organisations, have a vital part to play in putting sustainability at the forefront of decision-making opportunities, making it a major part of procurement, and empowering their teams and their supply chain to follow suit. We must act now – it was reported by the Environmental Protection Agency in March 2023 that only 10% of Government procurement complied with the mandatory green criteria.³

Building sustainable supply chains

Your supply chain is key to achieving your sustainability targets. It is important for client organisations to recognise the role their supply chain has to play in enabling them to achieve their sustainability ambitions. However, both domestic and international supply chains contain highly variable levels of maturity with respect to sustainability integration in their service offerings.

Early market engagement with the supply chain will enable organisations to determine the supply chain capacity and capabilities to meet specific sustainability requirements and targets, to understand where their supply chain is on their sustainability journey, and to identify supports required to develop the supply chain accordingly.

By embedding sustainability requirements in contracts, the supply chain is required to integrate sustainability into their service offering to remain relevant (Figure 2).



FIGURE 2: By embedding sustainability requirements in contracts, the supply chain is required to integrate sustainability into their service offering to remain relevant.

Elevating the prominence of sustainability

While sustainability requirements and criteria must be realistic and reflect the capability and capacity of the supply chain, they must also challenge the market to make the necessary step changes and advancements that are required to transition to a sustainable construction industry.

Contract documentation provides the opportunity for client organisations to set out their specific sustainability targets, and monitoring and reporting requirements for programme and project delivery. Examples

include carbon reduction targets, low carbon logistics, and energy and waste minimisation, as well as key performance indicators for community engagement and job opportunities.

Remember that if sustainability is not in the contracts, the client organisation is limited with respect to changing the direction afterwards without incurring increased costs.

With immediate effect, sustainability needs to influence the award of contracts when compared to price-related criteria. This is achieved by incorporating sustainability in selection and award criteria, and attributing a meaningful weighting to it in tender evaluations, thereby rewarding tenderers who are adapting to meet these challenges.

Measuring and monitoring sustainability performance

Effectively measuring, monitoring, and reporting on the sustainability performance of the supply chain is vital so that if targets are not being achieved, corrective action and improvement plans are put in place. The data collection associated with sustainability performance management can be a significant administrative effort, so it is advantageous to choose fewer performance indicators focussing on critical sustainability targets.

Upskilling and sharing learnings

The construction industry faces challenges in adapting to a more sustainable future, but there is great potential for opportunities and innovations. We need to keep pace with the legislative environment, evolving sustainability targets, and the continuing development of sustainable technologies and practices. This transition requires us all to develop new knowledge, skills, and experience. As we adopt more sustainable ways of working, and given that 2030 is fast approaching, sharing ideas, experience and learnings is critical. Supporting each other and working together, we will achieve a sustainable construction industry.

Call to action

We can drive change by:

- setting meaningful and ambitious sustainability objectives and targets;
- embedding sustainability objectives and targets into procurement;
- engaging with and supporting the supply chain; and,
- incorporating sustainability performance regimes into performance management of the supply chain.

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LEASING GREEN



GREEN CLAUSES ARE REVOLUTIONISING COMMERCIAL LEASING BY PRIORITISING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES.

Otherwise known as environmental clauses or sustainable clauses, green clauses refer to provisions that require the landlord or tenant to undertake certain environmental measures, such as reducing energy consumption, using renewable energy sources, or improving waste management practices. Carbon emissions associated with the construction, buildings, and infrastructure sectors account for approximately one-third of Ireland's emissions.

Economic benefits

A green clause can do more than reduce a building's carbon footprint and future-proof owners and occupiers against the transition risk of existing legislation and incoming regulation. It can also improve a business's reputation in the market, enhance the well-being of the building's occupants, and attract and/or sustain staff enticed by climate-conscious values. A recent survey by KPMG found that one-third of 'Gen Z' workers said they wanted jobs that are aligned with their environmental values and are focusing on their company's ecological commitments. For occupiers/tenants, there are potential cost savings through improved energy efficiency across

building management, services and utilities, which may also further their own sustainability commitments or environmental, social and governance (ESG) policies.

For owners/landlords, energy-efficient buildings could be more likely to attract prospective tenants (who will benefit from the cost savings above) and might therefore command higher rents and/or sale prices. These clauses will help to future-proof buildings and leases by incorporating circular economy and sustainability principles in anticipation of increased environmental regulations.

While some of the clauses are innovative, green lease clauses are increasingly being used by domestic and international occupiers and investors who want Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), or equivalent, certified buildings, and large institutional landlords and tenants, to help them achieve their corporate (ESG) targets.

FEATURE

Rowena Crowley
Director – Property & Asset
Management, Knight Frank





chillers) or equipment. This can be particularly challenging for small businesses with limited financial resources. It can also be challenging to determine who should bear the cost of implementing green initiatives, as both parties may benefit from reduced energy costs and improved sustainability.

Resistance from tenants

Tenants may resist adopting green practices, such as reducing water consumption or separating waste. This can be due to a lack of awareness, inconvenience, or a belief that it's not their responsibility; however, this is becoming less and less of an issue.

Measurement and/or verification

Measuring the effectiveness of green initiatives can be difficult, and it may be challenging to verify whether the measures outlined in the green clauses have been implemented and are producing the intended results. Key performance indicators (KPIs) can define specific metrics, such as: reducing greenhouse gas emissions through an environmental impact assessment; reporting and certifications through energy data tracking; installing smart thermostats, digital metering and monitoring of meters and submeters; and, installing energy management software, to process and analyse collected energy data. Other measures include energy performance benchmarking, energy audits, and tenant engagement and feedback.

Compliance

Landlords and tenants may face challenges in complying with green clauses, particularly if they lack expertise in environmental sustainability practices. If there is a lack of understanding of the environmental impact of their business practices, they may require education and training to comply with green clauses. It can also be difficult to ensure that tenants are adhering to green clauses, as they may not have direct control over building systems and equipment.

Legal issues

Green clauses can raise legal issues, particularly if they are not properly drafted, or if there is ambiguity in the language, which can lead to confusion and misunderstandings about

The Chancery Lane Project

The Chancery Lane Project (www.chancerylaneproject.org), a global initiative launched in 2019 by a group of lawyers and legal professionals, is aimed at using legal avenues to promote sustainability and to combat climate change, and focuses on three main clauses. The clauses are named after children, recognising that our actions to combat the climate crisis will benefit future generations. However, these clauses do have limitations as they were written predominantly for a new office premises within a multi-let building where the tenants contribute to common area maintenance through a service charge. Selected principles and drafting from these clauses have been adapted for the Irish market. The clauses should be treated as a menu from which landlords and tenants, working with their solicitors and other professional advisors, can select and tailor clauses that are suitable for their premises and their sustainability goals.

Challenges

While green clauses are becoming more common in commercial leases, there are still challenges that landlords, tenants and property professionals may face when implementing them. Here are some of the challenges of green clauses in commercial leases that we need to work together to overcome:

Cost

Implementing green initiatives can be costly, and landlords and tenants may be hesitant to bear the additional expenses associated with retrofitting and upgrading buildings, plant (such as boilers,

what is expected of the landlord or tenant. Green clauses may also be seen as an alteration of the landlord's property, which could require additional approvals, such as upgrading their renewable energy systems by adding solar panels or wind turbines to generate clean energy on site. Another legal issue is if the green clauses conflict with other provisions within the lease agreement, such as the lease yield up provisions.

Dilapidations to yield up clauses typically require the tenant to restore the property to its original condition at the end of the lease term. This may include repairing any damage to the property or its fixtures and fittings, as well as restoring any alterations or additions that were made during the lease term. This may also include removing perfectly functioning plant and equipment, for example the removal of carpets in good condition. The tenant may also be required to pay a sum of money to cover the cost of any necessary repairs or restoration work. Green clauses, on the other hand, require the tenant to take certain environmentally friendly actions to meet specific sustainability targets during the lease term. These clauses may cover issues such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, or the use of renewable energy sources. One of The Chancery Lane Project clauses, specifically aimed at green dilapidations, encourages landlords and tenants to re-use goods and materials. However, we come to problems when we get down to the specificities of the green lease. For instance, can you specify what cleaning products are to be used within the tenant's demise, or just ask and encourage them to use environmentally friendly products? Tenant engagement through your property manager is essential if they are not familiar with or aware of their options.

This is an area that requires a lot more joined-up thinking. In a circular economic model, the focus would be on the landlord and tenant working together to agree on what elements of the tenant's fit-out could remain for an incoming tenant.

In many cases, it is possible for dilapidations to yield up clauses and green clauses to co-exist within a commercial lease, with each clause having its own specific requirements and obligations. Within a commercial lease, this would depend on the specific terms and conditions of the lease agreement that was drafted. However, if there is a conflict between the two clauses, the specific wording of the lease agreement will determine which clause takes precedence. In general, if the lease agreement clearly specifies that one clause takes precedence over the other, then that clause will be given priority. However, if the lease agreement is ambiguous or does not provide clear guidance on the issue, then a court may need to interpret the agreement and determine which clause takes precedence in the specific circumstances of the case.

Enforcement

Enforcing green clauses can be challenging, particularly if there are no penalties or consequences for non-compliance. Landlords may also lack the resources to monitor and enforce compliance.

What can surveyors do?

To overcome these difficulties, we as surveyors can take several steps, such as educating landlords and tenants about the benefits of green practices, providing outline incentives for tenants to adopt green practices, offering professional advice when implementing green clauses, and developing standardised guidelines for implementing green programmes. Surveyors and property managers in particular can provide education, implement energy performance upgrade works, and collaborate with other stakeholders, such as utility companies and Government agencies, to access resources, funding (such as SEAL grants) and expertise to help implement green clauses. It is critical that we are upskilling constantly, and are able to provide the advice and support required by our industry.

Energy Performance of Buildings Directive

In March of this year, the European Parliament adopted the proposed revisions to the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, which will look to Member States to:

- harmonise Energy Performance Certificates, with performance classes rescaled with the aim of a zero-emission building stock by 2050;
- support the introduction of Minimum Energy Performance Standards, which can propel the renovation of buildings to a pathway of full decarbonisation by 2050;
- introduce whole-life carbon reporting for all new buildings, which will allow benchmarking by 2030; and,
- introduce Building Renovation Passports by the end of 2024 (a Building Renovation Passport is defined as a roadmap for deep renovation to transform the building into a Zero Energy Building by 2050 at the latest).

If Ireland follows suit, it is likely that we could see the revisions to this Directive being implemented here within the next 18 to 24 months. However, green clauses should go beyond the ambition of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive today to help tackle climate change, so we can all enjoy better quality buildings, to upskill and create high-quality green jobs, and to decrease our dependency on fossil fuels.

While green clauses can help to promote sustainability and reduce the environmental impact of buildings, they also pose several challenges that need to be addressed. We need to balance the benefits of implementing green clauses and find ways to overcome the challenges mentioned above. All stakeholders can work together to develop clear and measurable green clauses, seek expert advice where needed, and commit to regular monitoring and reporting to ensure compliance. With careful drafting of leases and clear communication, landlords and tenants can work together to create leases that are environmentally responsible and economically feasible.



SUSTAINABLE SURVEYING

SHANE CALDWELL IS HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY AT IPUT REAL ESTATE DUBLIN, AND IS A CHARTERED SURVEYOR WITH 16 YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE.

Shane Caldwell's career in surveying started at TU Dublin's Bolton Street campus, studying property economics. From there, he joined GVA Donal O Buachalla (now known as Avison Young) as a general practice surveyor, where he spent eight years getting a well-rounded experience in surveying by working across different departments. In this way, he finally found himself mostly working in the area of property management, which he continued to do when he began working in IPUT Real Estate's property management team. He says: "When I joined, there were only eight of us in the office, so it's quite a small, tight team. I was responsible for the management of a large portfolio at the time. It was probably about 80 properties: commercial office buildings, retail, high street and retail parks, and a lot of warehousing or logistics".

Developing a strategy

Shane and the company began to realise the increased importance of developing a sustainability strategy when international investors started to ask questions around environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues and other sustainable practices. Shane took on the responsibility of educating both himself and IPUT on matters that affect sustainability, and his first task was attempting to understand and implement the global real estate sustainability benchmark (GRESB): "I was tasked with looking into that and it was a real eye opener at the time. It seemed like quite a big task and that really got me focused on and trying to pull together a lot of what IPUT was doing

already and how we could put a framework around it and have a formal sustainability strategy in place".

After some time, and with growing environmental and social responsibility on the agenda, Shane was appointed as Head of Sustainability at IPUT, where he looks after the company's sustainability strategy, and how it is implemented, developed, and reported over time.

Shane believes that, for property management experts, sustainability is an easy concept to grasp: "A lot of organisations say that it's in our DNA – this idea of making sensible decisions, long-term decisions, in terms of the best interest of property. So for me, there's a really good synergy there between a good approach to sustainability and a good approach to safe management of our built environment".

Expert advice

Shane's role involves a lot of reporting, such as GRESB, with a lot of investor queries to respond to in that regard. He says: "From January through to the end of June, there's constant early rolling deadlines of reporting on our data. We have to collect all the data, like the electricity, gas, water, and energy data across our entire portfolio. We can analyse the performance of our buildings, and engage with our management team and our asset services team in terms of reporting back to them how energy performance is in certain buildings. We can also use that information to inform longer-term decisions around retrofits and renovation projects that we might be doing".

Shane also supports the rest of the company in ensuring that everyone is in line with IPUT's sustainability strategy: "I'd sit in a lot of cross-departmental meetings with the development team, ensuring that what they're doing is on track with our strategy, and with our investment

team around how we're engaging with our investors and responding to queries".

For Shane, one of the biggest challenges in terms of sustainability is the confusing jargon involved. He continues: "I think with all those acronyms and terminology floating around in relation to certifications or regulations, you spend a lot of time and effort trying to decipher all that and come up with plans. As an industry, you need to be just taking more action. You're better off just doing small things like tracking your energy performance and then making adjustments and focusing on those types of things, making sure you're on the front foot when the regulation does come. Another challenge is around who's going to pay for all these retrofits and is it more expensive. I think an interesting area to keep an eye on will be this debate around older buildings, whether you retrofit them or you knock them down and redevelop them. For the planners, particularly in Dublin City Council, you now have to put in very good arguments for why you'd be knocking down maybe a 40-year-old building to replace it with a new one".



Shane lives in Drumcondra with his family but says he doesn't forget his roots as a proud Roscommon man. He is a keen sports fan and even helps his sons out with soccer training. He also enjoys reading, and says he loves a good murder mystery novel.

SURVEYOR PROFILE

Rebecca Pollard
Journalist and sub-editor
Think Media Ltd



ACCORDING TO PLAN

THE FIRST REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK HAS NOW BEEN INITIATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HERITAGE, FIVE YEARS SINCE IT WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED, AND THE SCSI IS CONTRIBUTING TO THE DISCUSSIONS.



The National Planning Framework (NPF), together with the National Development Plan (NDP) 2021, combine to form Project Ireland 2040, the overarching policy and planning framework for the social, economic and cultural development of Ireland.

A 'Road Map' for this first revision of the NPF was published by the Department in June, which sets out the purpose, context and structure of the consultation and review process. This document also summarises some of the key policy and legislation changes that have occurred since the NPF was established, which will be integral considerations for any amendments proposed under this review process. Some of the key items of note include the following:

- Climate Action Plan 2023;
- Draft Planning & Development Bill 2022;
- General Scheme Land Value Sharing and

- Urban Development Zones Bill 2022;
- Residential Zoned Land Tax (2022);
- Town Centre First policy framework (2022);
- Housing for All (2021);
- National Marine Planning Framework (2021); and,
- Urban Regeneration and Development Fund.

In addition to the above, a number of new public bodies have also been established by the Government in recent years. These include the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) and the Land Development Agency (LDA), with respective mandates to support the effective functioning of the planning system, and to bring forward housing delivery on behalf of the State.

Planning Advisory Forum

As part of a commitment provided in the Housing for All policy document, a Planning Advisory Forum (PAF) has also been established to contribute to relevant planning policy matters. This forum has now reconvened for the purposes of this NPF revision, which is being chaired by the Minister of State, and comprises members from various relevant

organisations, professional bodies and technical expert groups.

As a representative of the SCSI, I attended the first meeting of the PAF in July at the Custom House in Dublin. At the meeting, the Department provided further relevant context for the NPF review, and explained the role and purpose of the PAF moving forward, with initial queries and observations then submitted by various member of the forum.

The Department also set out the proposed timeframe for the review process over the next nine months, with a target date of May 2024 for final publication of the updated NPF. A key next step is the completion of the Expert Group's report and issues paper, which is due to be finalised in August. The next meeting of the PAF will take place in mid-September, where members will provide feedback on the Expert Group's key findings, with the process then moving towards the preparation of the Draft NPF in winter 2023.

I look forward to working with the forum over the coming months and we will keep SCSI members informed of progress as the review progresses.

Further information can also be found on the Government's website – <https://www.gov.ie>.

THE LAST WORD

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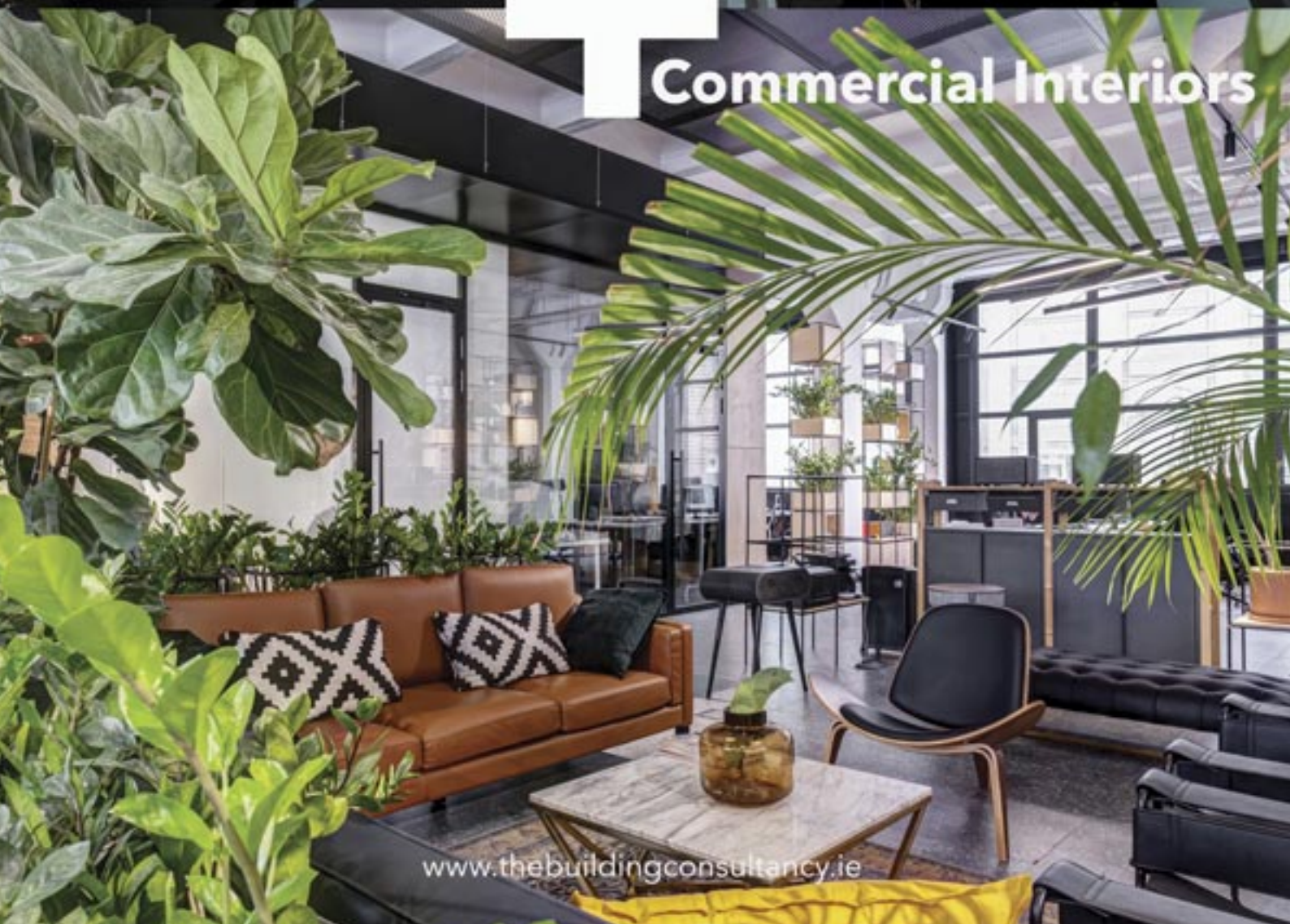
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