



EDGE Report - October 2014

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Jane Powell
Debate Secretary

The Edge is a multidisciplinary built environment think tank with members drawn from across the built environment professions and beyond

Edge activities - summary

In the past year the Edge has been busy on a number of fronts including running its debate series and liaising with and briefing an ever-wider range of individuals and organisations, but its main focus has been on its Commission on Future Professionalism, which will report in the Autumn of 2014.

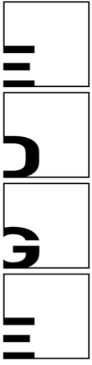
The Commission has meant a high level of engagement over recent months with the Edge's sponsoring professional institutions (CIBSE, CIOB, ICE, IStructE, RIBA, RICS) as well as the Construction Industry Council (CIC). The Edge is delighted that this group has been joined this year by the Society for the Environment (SocEnv).

The Edge has also been very pleased to re-engage with The Ove Arup Foundation, its founding sponsor. The Foundation is generously supporting the Commission of Inquiry along with REHAU. The Edge also continues to maintain strong links with its other sponsor organisations, the UCL Energy Institute and The Building Centre.

The Edge committee

The Edge 'Committee' continues to meet on a monthly basis with several members achieving additional prominence:

- Lynne Sullivan was reappointed to the Green Construction Board and has been made Chair of the RIBA's Sustainable Futures.
- Simon Foxell published *The Carbon Primer to the Built Environment* in January 2014 (Routledge)
- Sunand Prasad and Penoyre & Prasad published *Retrofit for Purpose: Low Energy Renewal of Non-Domestic Buildings*, March 2014 (RIBA Publishing)
- Dr Dorte Riche Jørgensen, industrial director for the Royal Academy of Engineering Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Building Design at Heriot Watt University, gave evidence in June 2014 to the House of Commons Energy Climate Change Committee on behalf of the Edge
- Dave Hampton has been appointed External Relationships Manager at the Society of the Environment
- Stephen Hill was awarded the Churchill Trust Travelling Fellowship
- Jane Wernick gave evidence to the London Assembly's Planning Committee on the London skyline in June 2014
- Chris Jofeh gave evidence to the GLA's housing committee in July 2014 on the regeneration of London's social housing estates.
- Professor Tadj Oreszczyn has been appointed Director of the Bartlett School of Environment, Energy and Resources (BSEER)
- Chris Twinn has launched TwinnSustainabilityInnovation
- Andrew Scoones has established a new consultancy, ngenuity Ltd
- Robin Nicholson, Jane Briginshaw and Tadj Oreszczyn have all been appointed to the Expert Panel of the NHBC Foundation



In 2013-4 the Edge welcomed onto the Edge Committee

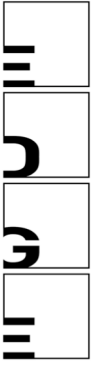
- William Buckland, strategic planner and development specialist
- Sue James of the Trees and Design Action Group
- Sebastian Wood and Ollie Wildman of Ramboll
- Lee Franck of Arup
- Ciaran Malik of Ramboll
- Richard Boyd of Arup Associates
- Oliver Smith of 5th Studio
- David Lindsey of Max Fordham

The Edge works at the intersection of the construction industry professions, research bodies and policy-making groups inside and out of government. To that end its members maintain regular contact with professional and academic bodies, technical and campaigning organisations and central and local government departments. Members of the Edge also teach and lecture widely, both in the UK and abroad as well as being active professionally in the design and delivery of significant projects across the world

Members of the Edge committee continue their active involvement with sponsoring construction and built environment institutions as well as other groups including; the Academy of Urbanism, Aldersgate Group, All Party Parliamentary Climate Change Group (APPCCG), Architects' Council of Europe (ACE), British Property Federation, Building Futures, Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC), Cambridgeshire Quality Panel, Civic Trust, Construction Industry Council, Design Commission for Wales, Design Council, European Forum for Architectural Policies (EFAP), Global Commons Institute (GCI), Green Deal fora, Good Homes Alliance, National House-Building Council (NHBC), Research Excellence Framework Built Environment Panel, Royal Academy of Engineering, Royal Town Planning Institute, Shape east, the RSA, UK Green Building Council

The Edge has close links with a range of UK research bodies including the Bartlett Schools of Environment, Energy and Resources and Planning, the Building Research Establishment (BRE), Cambridge University Engineering Department Centre for Sustainable Development, Imperial College London, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), School of Construction Management and Engineering University of Reading, the Technology Strategy Board (TSB), the University of Bath, London South Bank University and in particular the UCL Energy Institute.

Members of the Edge are also in regular contact with government departments and members of both houses of Parliament as well as other arms length bodies and non-governmental organisations.



Edge workstreams 2013-14

1 Edge Debate

Holding debates that examine areas of policy-making and developing technical understanding remains the Edge's central activity. Debates examine questions that urgently need airing, but are not necessarily susceptible to easy answers. Edge Debates use an invited expert audience, including senior members of the sponsoring institutions, civil servants, academics and practitioners as well as politicians and influential public figures, to discuss and make sense of pressing issues facing the construction industry and its professions. Over the past year the Edge has run a series of debates aiming, as ever, at challenging the thinking of the construction industry. The main component of the past year's debates has been the five sessions of the Edge Commission of Inquiry on future professionalism – see below – the Commission, which developed out of the Edge's previous work on 'New Professionalism', has focused directly on the Edge's sponsoring organisations, the professional institutions.

Debates and other events held in 2013 – 14

Happold Medal lecture 2013 – October 29th 2013, ICE

Collective responsibility for a sustainable industry

Host: **Construction Industry Council**

Lecture: **Robin Nicholson – Cullinan Studio & the Edge**

Chair: **Jack Pringle – CIC Chair**

Speakers: Tony Burton, Louise Clarke, Robin Wilson & Gavin Thompson

Debate 59 – December 9th 2013, Cambridge Union

BIM is the answer

Chair: **David M. Adamson - Consultant in Sustainable Construction and former Director of Construction, OGC, HM Government**

Speakers: Paddy Conaghan, Anna Winstanley, Casey Rutland, Doug King, Georgina Smit & Simon Foxell

The Ecobuild Debate – 4th March 2014, Ecobuild, London

Can democracy deliver sustainability?

Chair: **Babita Sharma - BBC World News**

Speakers: John Sauven, Rt. Hon Lord Deben, John Gummer & Jane Davidson

Debate 60 – March 5th 2014, The Building Centre

Edge Commission of Inquiry on Future Professionalism Session 1: The Environment

Chair: **Paul Morrell – Immediate Past Government Chief Construction Adviser**

Speakers: Keith Clarke, Stephen Matthews, Chris Blythe & Scott Steedman

Debate 61 – April 23rd 2014, The Building Centre

Edge Commission of Inquiry on Future Professionalism Session 2: The Economy

Chair: **Paul Morrell – Immediate Past Government Chief Construction Adviser**

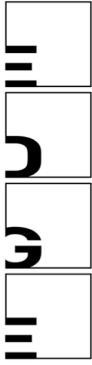
Speakers: Ian Brinkley, Stephen Hodder, Sean Tompkins, Nick Russell

Debate 62 – May 7th 2014, The Building Centre

Edge Commission of Inquiry on Future Professionalism Session 3: Society

Chair: **Paul Morrell – Immediate Past Government Chief Construction Adviser**

Speakers: Matthew Taylor, Colin Haylock, Barry Clarke, Sue Illman



Debate 63 – May 22nd 2014, The Building Centre

Edge Commission of Inquiry on Future Professionalism Session 4: Future Value

Chair: Paul Morrell – Immediate Past Government Chief Construction Adviser

Speakers: Graham Watts, Bill Bordass, Daisy Froud, Sunand Prasad, Lee Franck & Ciaran Malik

Briefing Dinner – July 9th 2014, RICS

Edge Commission of Inquiry on Future Professionalism: Briefing dinner

Chair: Paul Morrell – Immediate Past Government Chief Construction Adviser

Speaker: Louise Brooke-Smith, President RICS

Details of all Edge debates, including presentations, speaker biographies, lists of attendees and notes of the debate are available at www.edgedebate.com

The 2014-2015 series of Edge Debates will include the launch of the Commission of Inquiry's findings, further work on developing thinking on the idea of a National Plan and a study into educating for inter-disciplinarity with London South Bank University, as well as individual events on housing, the cost to value equation and tall buildings.

2 Edge Commission of Inquiry on Future Professionalism

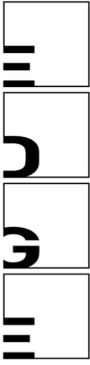
Throughout 2014 the Edge has been organising and holding its first Commission of Inquiry on the subject of the future of professionalism within the construction industry and specifically the response of the professional institutions to current and foreseeable challenges. This project continues the work of the Edge on New Professionalism that has been running since 2011.

Paul Morrell OBE, the UK Government's first Chief Construction Adviser (2009-12) agreed to Chair the Commission Panel on which he was joined by Jenny Baster (Arup), Tony Burton (Gardiner & Theobald & Chair of the Construction Industry Council), Isabel McAllister (MACE), Professor Alan Penn (UCL) and Karen Rogers (formerly Heathrow Airports Ltd). The Ove Arup Foundation agreed to sponsor the Commission and the dissemination of its report.

Four evidence-taking sessions were held at The Building Centre from March to May (see above) involving senior representatives of most of the construction industry institutions (CIBSE, CIOB, ICE, IStructE, LI, RAE, RICS, RIBA, RICS and RTPi) as well as several distinguished keynote speakers and, at the last session, a range of speakers representing a new generation of professionals. These events were sponsored by REHAU with support from the Society for the Environment (SocEnv).

In July 2014 a dinner was hosted by the RICS to discuss the issues raised and to brief the Institutions on the key questions suggested by the initial sessions. The Commission will be preparing its report over the summer for publication and further deliberation in the Autumn of 2014.

See also the preliminary report in the RIBA Journal on the Commission's work at <http://www.ribaj.com/intelligence/a-united-front-to-tackle-the-future>.



3 A National Plan

In the face of serious challenges in areas including energy supply, climate stress and capital management, the Edge, along with many other individuals and organisations, is concerned with the short-term nature of the UK's approach to forward planning. In response the Edge is exploring what a National Plan with a ten - or more - year horizon might look like.

The point of the exercise is not to say what should be in the plan but to describe its characteristics and to provide a framework and process for re-establishing the idea of national planning in our political language.

This workstream has been underway for some time and the initial work on the subject underpinned the contribution by Jane Davidson, former Minister for environment and sustainability in Wales and initiator of Wales' national sustainable development strategy, at the Ecobuild Debate in March 2014. In the year ahead the Edge will be holding a series of workshops to develop the thinking behind a new National Plan.

4 Educating for inter-disciplinarity

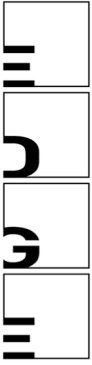
If the future, as most suspect and many employers are demanding, will be defined by a more mobile workforce, able to cross boundaries and work in many different fields over a career and capable of resolving requirements and integrating inputs from a wide range of disciplines and specialisms to deliver a successful built environment; then how should students be educated for that future?

The Edge is currently exploring these questions with London South Bank University as they bring all their built environment disciplines together into one school. In early 2015 the Edge and LSBU will run a series of workshops and events to explore the question of educating for inter-disciplinarity, culminating in a conference to discuss and evaluate the range of possible approaches

5 Consultation

The Edge offers its services to government, built environment bodies and professional organisations as a source of positive criticism and considered ideas. In the last year in addition to its sponsor institutions the Edge has met with:

- Building Magazine
- Building Research & Information Journal
- The Centre for London
- Design Council CABI
- E3G
- Ecobuild
- Future Cities Catapult
- The Government's Chief Construction Adviser
- The Greater London Authority Planning Committee
- The Green Construction Board
- The Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MP
- House of Commons Energy Climate Change Committee
- The Landscape Institute
- London South Bank University
- Royal Academy of Engineering
- The RSA
- Urban Land Institute



6 Brokerage

Fundamental to the Edge's work is the idea of linkage and making connections between different disciplines and between the worlds of research, practice and policy-making. The Edge works with its sponsoring professional institutes, their presidents and senior executives; with governments and their advisers and agencies; with academic and research organisations; with think tanks, arms-length delivery bodies and pressure groups to encourage cross-disciplinary thinking and solution finding.

The Edge is currently supporting the establishment of an independent Institute of Building Performance – an initiative being led by Bill Bordass.

The Edge is backing a Special Issue of Building Research and Information entitled 'Closing the policy gaps: from formulation to outcomes'.

The Edge has contributed to Building Magazine's Agenda15 campaign and is helping Building develop the ideas submitted into a joint construction industry manifesto for the 2015 general election.

Edge member George Adams is co-ordinating policy proposals for the CIC's shared election manifesto with assistance from the Edge.

7 Thinking and Beliefs

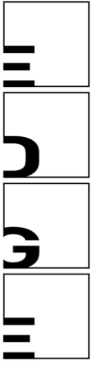
The Edge is a thinking organisation, providing a forum for a wide range of industry expertise to come together to address current issues, policy development and emerging ideas; to reconsider previous experience and bring extensive practical knowledge to bear on present problems.

The Edge's focus is the built environment and the professional bodies that work with it; but it has the freedom to think widely and to propose initiatives and policy ideas that address the big picture. It will continue to use its institutional freedom to challenge, to provoke and to influence. Importantly, the Edge's thinking capacity is available to other built environment bodies to help them develop thinking, share ideas, test propositions: a sounding board for the industry only used to dialogue within its own segment.

8 Edge membership

The Edge is developing its membership structure to allow it to strengthen links with a wide range of interested individuals and groups as well as to generate a modest level of regular income. Members can belong to a number of different membership categories:

- Emeritus members: Long-standing Edge members and supporters who are no longer continuously involved in Edge activities. By invitation only.
- Committee members: those who regularly take part in Edge meetings and activities. Over the last year this has included a new, younger group of members. By invitation only. A small annual fee is charged
- Friends and supporters of the Edge: regular attendees at and invitees to Edge debates and all those who want to be kept up-to-date with Edge activities and events. Friends will have access to the Edge's LinkedIn discussion forum. On application to the Edge (at contact@edgedebate.com). Free.



9 Edge Funding

The Edge currently runs without external funding and is dependent on the goodwill and contributions of its members, their employers and its supporting organisations (the RIBA, ICE, CIBSE, RICS, IStructE, CIOB, SocEnv, CIC, The Building Centre and the Energy Institute). In the recent past the Edge has been generously funded by The Ove Arup Foundation and The Carbon Trust.

The sponsor institutes provide support in kind through the hosting of debates at their premises along with the provision of refreshments and access to senior members and staff.

The individual companies of Edge committee members have generously hosted the monthly committee meetings. In 2013-14 these have been held at: Arup, AKTII, Buro Happold, Cullinan Studio, Davies Maguire + Whitby, The Energy Institute, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios (FCBS), Hoare Lea, Jane Wernick Associates, Max Fordham, Lend Lease and Penoyre & Prasad with Exploration Architecture.

The Edge also benefits greatly from the time provided by a range of senior members of the construction professions including architects, engineers, surveyors, planners, social scientists and others, including current and former presidents and vice presidents from the institutes who are active on the Edge committee.

The Edge is currently actively seeking funding for the year 2014-15 and beyond in order to continue and develop its activities, in particular the Edge debates and the work of the research Edge. Please contact Simon Foxell of the Edge at contact@edgedebate.com if you are interesting in discussing this further.

The Edge October 2014