

Major Projects Association

Year in Action 2022

40th anniversary issue



Connecting people, sharing ideas,
improving major project outcomes
www.majorprojects.org



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40th anniversary celebrations

Our financial year 2021–22 marked the 40th anniversary of the Association – a milestone which we celebrated in a number of ways. As we did a decade ago, we organised a special dinner for our closest friends and supporters which brought together the team, Board members (both past and present) as well as those members who have been part of our community for at least 20 of those 40 years. These included Philip Isgar who first attended one of our events in the 1990s and Guy Giffin who has been presenting his simulations on our CPD offerings for 22 years.

Letter from the Chairman



Dear MPA Members,

2022 has been a year of political turbulence which, at time of going to press, has calmed a little. But there remain a host of uncertainties about what 2023 will bring. Widespread disruption to international trade in energy, food and raw materials, and volatility in financial markets, are creating uncertainty and a reluctance to invest. Governments will want to continue to support major projects to help stimulate their economies. But financially they will have less room to manoeuvre. It is perhaps a time for ingenious solutions, novel investment structures and ruthless efficiency in the way projects are delivered. Strong leadership will be vital, as will genuine diversity of thought. These are two themes in the Association's strategic plan to which a number of our events next year will be linked.

The third theme is environmental sustainability. Some will wish to sideline this issue in major projects - 'it's too difficult'...'it will add too much cost' etc etc. These are short-sighted views and must be resisted. Our customers and end-users deserve better and our employees are with them. Most of our projects will be in use for two or three generations or more. They have to be proofed for the future. We have got to find ways of doing this which are both affordable and good value for money. In the Astronomer Royal's most apt phrase, 'there is no Planet B'. We have to look after this one. The Association will continue to explore this issue throughout next year.

I hand over to my successor as Chair, Emma Howard Boyd, at the end of this year and have built for her an exceptionally capable and diverse Board. I am delighted to have welcomed Kay Hughes, David Goldstone, Jim O'Sullivan and Joanna Rowelle as Directors this year. It is difficult to imagine a stronger team to lead the Association into this uncertain future.

It has been an enormous privilege to walk along with you all for the last nine years. I have enjoyed every minute. My predecessor in the role, Sir Rob Walmsley, tragically died earlier this year and is much missed by all of us. He was always ready to provide advice without ever interfering and I learned a great deal from him.

This message comes with my very best wishes to everyone in the Association to continue the excellent work you do. I have every confidence that you will weather the storms ahead and deliver great projects that will be in use for decades to come. Good luck.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Laurence". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

SirTim Laurence KCVO, CB

Chairman 2013–2022
Major Projects Association

Lessons from the Archive

The first five years of the Association's life are brilliantly preserved in six hard-back bound publications which include the minutes of all the Executive Committee meetings, letters from companies agreeing to join (or decline), event programmes and details of the AGMs.

Despite the 35-year-old dust and dead paper mites, Manon Bradley, Development Director, read through them to uncover key events in our early history, to understand if we did things differently then and to see some familiar names from our illustrious past. She found some great gems which we think will entertain our members today:

Despite the very thorough maintenance of records and exemplary filing we can find no written information about the first meeting of the Association.

The second meeting was held in October 1981 at which time Uwe Kitzinger was appointed as Chair of the meeting and a programme of four seminars and a future planning meeting was agreed. The topics of these first seminars were:

- The Channel Tunnel – lessons of 1970–75
- Recent UK experience in financing major projects
- Unresolved problems of risk
- Unresolved problems of project organisation

Key to the organisation and delivery of these seminars were the central figures of the Association at this time:

- Uwe Kitzinger
- David Suratgar – who served on our Board until 2012
- Chris Benjamin
- Allan Sykes
- Derek Fraser

Whilst the Association was established in 1981 it didn't hold its first Executive Council (equivalent of our Board) until May 1982. One of their first tasks was to appoint Philip Worthington as the first Executive Director.

By June 1982 they had attracted 34 members paying a one-off entrance fee of £1,500 plus an annual membership fee of £3,500. Adjusted for inflation that would be the equivalent of £13,161.86 so we can be assured that our current membership fee is very reasonable!

Included within those 34 members were:

- Arthur Anderson – now Accenture
- Coopers & Lybrand – now PwC
- Ernst & Whinney – now EY
- Balfour Beatty – still Balfour Beatty – and the only one of those organisations to have had a continuous membership of the Association

The Executive Council was convinced of the importance of creating a coherent schedule of seminars for members and in 1982 we see what we would recognise today as our Programme of Events. They planned six 2-day seminars throughout 1982 (deliberately excluding August – a very sensible approach that we still adopt today).

As early as July 1982 the Executive Council agreed upon the importance of recording and publishing transcripts from seminars. Interestingly they budgeted appropriately for this, including £70 per seminar for the hire of recording equipment and tapes.

At the third meeting of the Executive Council in October 1982 there was a paper about prospective members and once again the format is very similar to our current Board level discussions about possible members – they are listed by whether they are project funders, project owners, advisors or contractors.

Our founders clearly had a very good understanding of what is necessary for a successful seminar. One of the document outlines 'guidelines on the presentation of seminars' produced by Derek Fraser who by then was Chair of the Programme Committee. Eleanor Mortimer, our current Events Manager would have been delighted with his request for speakers to share their presentations one month in advance of the event. (Nowadays she frequently gets them on the day of the event!)

I am sure we can all agree with the note that went out to members concerning the conference in 1983 which recognised 'that there is a limit to sustained concentration in conference' and recommended that sufficient time is allowed for 'constructive boozing'!

Our early members had the same struggle as we do of ensuring senior level engagement whilst at the same time trying to provide opportunities for the involvement of a wider range of staff in member organisations.

They also faced similar issues around payment of fees. There is a super letter from HM McCamish of Bechtel GB Ltd apologising that they find themselves in the most unfortunate situation due to an oversight... they fully intended to join the Association in 1984 but someone, somewhere along the line failed to make the allocation within their 1984 budget. Thankfully they joined in 1985.

The team has always been relatively small. For the first two decades it was just 2 to 3 people. The appointment of Eleanor Mortimer marked a doubling of the events team from 1 to 2. The team is still only 8 people strong, but they punch far above their weight – particularly since lockdown has taught us all how to organise virtual events.

What mattered to our founders and founding members back in the early 1980s is the same as it is today – well-planned events, thorough reporting, good customer service and plenty of time for 'constructive boozing'!

Manon Bradley

Development Director, 2005 – present

New Chair

The Board are pleased to announce that Emma Howard Boyd CBE is to be the new Chair of the Major Projects Association when Sir Tim Laurence stands down at the end of 2022. Emma has had an extensive career in financial services at the forefront of the climate change, environmental and sustainable finance agenda.

She was Chair of the Environment Agency and an ex-officio board member of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs from 2016–22. She is currently Chair of the Green Finance Institute, an Adviser to the Board of Trade, and a UN Global Ambassador for Race to Zero and Race to Resilience. Emma was the UK Commissioner to the Global Commission on Adaptation from 2018 until its sunset in January 2021.

Emma serves on several boards and advisory committees which include:

- Liontrust Asset Management
- The Coalition for Climate Resilient Investment (Co-Chair)
- The European Climate Foundation
- Accounting for Sustainability

Before becoming Chair of the Environment Agency in September 2016, she had served as a Board member since 2009, was Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee until 2016, and also served as Deputy Chair. Her other previous roles include being the Chair of Trustees at ShareAction from 2015–18, Vice-Chair of the Future Cities Capital from 2013–18, and acting as a Non-Executive Director at the Aldersgate Group from 2012–18 and Thrive Renewables (previously Triodos Renewables) from 2004–12. Before that, she held various executive roles at Jupiter Asset Management. She was also Chair of UKSIF (the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association), a member of the Commission on Environmental Markets and Economic Performance, and the Green Finance Taskforce.

Emma's first task upon taking up the role is to Chair our rescheduled Annual Conference, where she will have the opportunity to meet our members.

Diversity in Major Projects

In 2015 the Association established the Gender Balance Initiative in response to the fact that so few women were in senior positions in major projects. At the time of the launch our annual dinner was a microcosm of this reality, with just one woman for nine men, such that women were allocated one per table. We launched our initiative in November 2015 and the next 12 months saw eight events, associated reports and additional studies – raising the issue to become a key ‘to do’ item for Chief Executives and key project personnel. Our year of concerted effort was followed by regular and consistent awareness raising and best practice sharing on the topic of gender balance as well as on broader equality issues.

Seven years later and our annual dinner looked very different indeed – there were equal numbers of men and women at the event which is always a reflection of key project personnel amongst our members. Whilst we would like to take full credit for this change there are undoubtedly many other factors at play, but it is an indicator that raising the issue and sharing best practice can make a significant difference.

The Association has recently re-calibrated its efforts in the Diversity and Equality arena with our newly established Diversity Champions Network. We have faith that they will be just as successful as our previous work in this space.

Beyond the Business as Usual

The Association's 2025 strategy includes three 'landmark objectives' to improve major project outcomes covering: Environmental Sustainability, Diversity and Project Capability.

Our ambition is for the Association and our members to move the dial on these key issues by the end of this strategic plan in 2025. For each of these objectives we have established a Board-level Task and Finish Group and we are developing communities of champions for each.

Environmental Sustainability

Chair: Kay Hughes – HS2

Members: David Smith – Capital Dynamics, Janet Greenwood – KPMG Ltd, Kerry Bangle – WSP

Diversity

Chair: David Goldstone – Restoration and Renewal Delivery Authority Ltd

Members: Belinda Blake – National Highways, Joanna Rowelle – Arup, Janet Campbell – Restoration and Renewal Delivery Authority Ltd

Project Capability

Chair: Michèle Dix – Major Projects Association Board

Members: David Marsh – MoD, Fiona Spencer – IPA, Baney Young – Network Rail Ltd, Liz King – Mott MacDonald, Paul Chapman – Saïd Business School

We also have a two thriving **member-led networks**. The first focuses on the role of the Sponsors – this network has been busy throughout the year organising a site visit to HS2 and a knowledge exchange, and they are beginning to plan a full seminar for 2023. The Young Professionals Network have held their first event, hosted by Accenture, on the topic of sustainability. Their second event will be hosted by Arcadis in early 2023 and will focus on the topic of making major projects investable.

Professional Development

Professional development and sharing good practice are at the very centre of the Association's objectives. In addition to the wide range of events and seminars, the Association offers its membership a number of professional development opportunities. At the heart of our CPD offerings is the work of Guy Giffin of Prendo who has been delivering project simulations to our delegates for over 20 years. Here is the story of that collaboration in Guy's own words:

Major Projects Simulator

"In 1999 I was pointed towards the Major Projects Association, by a Professor at Cranfield University after speaking with him about a simulation we had then recently developed for Shell; a software-based simulation (or 'game') that modelled the behaviour of stakeholders in a complex and sensitive major project scenario.

I had not heard of the Major Projects Association at that time, but did know of Dr Martin Barnes, the Executive Director. I think I can recall reviewing the MPA website (it was quite early days for websites!) so the MPA was a bit of mystery to me.

A brief telephone conversation with Martin led to an invite to deliver the stakeholder simulation on the MPA's then twice a year 'The Challenge of Major Projects' (CMP) course, held at MPA HQ: Templeton College, Oxford. In March 2000 I facilitated the simulation (version 1, loaded via CD-Rom!) with an experienced group of 16 (all male) participants from MPA member organisations including: MoD, PA Consulting, Arup, Bechtel and also Railtrack.

Some time later, in February 2022, I delivered the stakeholder simulation (version 6!) on CMP for the 23rd time, so every year since the two courses in 2000, apart from 2020 when CMP did not happen. Some of my key reflections on this are:

- The pleasure of working with the fantastic MPA team (especially Martin, Manon, Denise and most recently Andy).
- The privilege of working with about 400 CMP delegates, and learning from them as part of the simulation evolution process.
- And, whilst some aspects of leading major projects has changed somewhat since 2000, the fundamental nature of the stakeholder related challenges has not changed that much!

Partly as a result of delivering the stakeholder simulation on CMP, in 2006 a conversation began with Martin and the MPA about developing a more comprehensive major project simulation that would model a wider range of project dynamics and challenges. In 2007 we began work on designing and developing this new simulation, with expert input provided from across the MPA community, especially Martin – who chose the stadium project scenario.

In September 2008, the first MPA simulator event was held at Templeton (or ‘Egrove Park’?) with 25 delegates from member organisations including: London Development Agency, Laing O’Rourke, BAE Systems and the BBC. The MPA subsequently decided to host this simulation workshop three times a year, and in June 2022 I facilitated the 38th edition of this one day simulation workshop (the 5th to be delivered virtually), and that has now been attended by approximately 800 delegates.

As with CMP, working with the MPA team and the many delegates, who have invariably brought talent, diligence, insight, collaborative spirit and good humour to the simulator event has been one of the high points of my working life.

Finally it is encouraging to note that in the most recent simulator event with 24 delegates, 12 were male.”

“A really great experience I couldn’t recommend it more. It was a bit daunting at first as we had never worked with each other, but it was fantastic to meet new people from different sectors and collaborate together. Obviously it was great to win.”

Michael Gurden, Fibre Build Manager at Openreach

Rising Stars Seminars

The Rising Stars programme is aimed at those professional high-flyers in the sector, to support them to plan their career and to enable space for self-reflection at a critical point in their development. The programme is aimed at those in line for senior leadership and focuses on:

- Analysis of key issues affecting major projects
- Attitudes and ways of thinking
- Establishing effective relationships with clients and professionals
- Marshalling and presenting opinions
- Establishing a network of contacts with high-flyers in other member organisations
- Building business confidence

"I'd highly recommend the course to others and wish to thank the MPA for hosting it."

2021 delegate

The Challenge of Major Projects

This in-depth course is delivered in virtual and face-to-face modules over the course of four weeks in February each year. It is aimed at senior project delivery professionals and limited to 20 people per year. The course has been delivered for over 20 years with regular updates and refreshes to ensure it is still relevant and of high quality.

Discussions with those who attended in the past have revealed that although some speakers have changed, the core of the programme remains focussed upon: understanding the role of project leaders across the whole life cycle; developing a strong network; providing space for reflection and fun.

Member Organisations

(as at 31st July 22)

Accenture	Department for Work and Pensions	Keltbray	Resolex
Advance Consultancy Ltd	Department of Health & Social Care	KPMG LLP	Restoration and Renewal Delivery Authority
AECOM	Department for Education	Laing O'Rourke	Saïd Business School
Alliance Manchester Business School	Diamond Light Source Ltd	London Legacy Development Corporation	School of Construction and Project Management, UCL
Amey plc	East West Rail	Ministry of Defence	Scottish Power
Anglian Water	Environment Agency – now Defra	Moorhouse Consulting	Sellafield Ltd
Arcadis LLP	European Investment Bank	Mott MacDonald	Siemens UK plc
Arup	EY	National Grid	Sir Robert McAlpine
Atkins - part of the SNC-Lavalin Group	FCDO Services	National Nuclear Laboratory	Tetra Tech
AWE	Fluor Ltd	NATS	The Nichols Group
BAE Systems	Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP	Network Rail Ltd	The Oakland Group
Balfour Beatty plc	Gardiner & Theobald	Newton Europe	Tideway
BAM Nuttall Ltd	Gleeds Management Services Ltd	Nodes & Links	Transport for London
Bechtel Ltd	Heathrow	Northumbria University	Transport for Wales
Bentley Systems	Highways England	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority -	Turner & Townsend
BP Exploration Operating Company Ltd	HS2	Openreach	UK Power Networks
Cabinet Office	IBM United Kingdom Ltd	PA Consulting	University of Edinburgh
Cavendish Nuclear/Babcock	Imperial College London	Pinsent Masons LLP	University of Leeds
Copper Consultancy	Infrastructure and Projects Authority	Projecting Success	Viridor
Costain	Institution of Civil Engineers	PwC	WMC: University of Warwick
DAR Group Ltd	IPA Global	QinetiQ	Wood
Deloitte LLP	J Murphy & Sons Ltd	Ramboll	WSP
Department for Transport	Jacobs Group	Raytheon Systems Limited	

Board of Directors

(as at 31st July 22)

Chairman

Sir Tim Laurence KCVO CB
Chairman
Major Projects Association

Members

Dr Michèle Dix CBE
Ex Transport for London
Retired

David Goldstone OBE
Chief Executive
Restoration and Renewal Delivery
Authority Ltd

Claire Gott MBE
UK Head of Industry
WSP

Kay Hughes
Design Director
HS2

Nirmal Kotecha
Director of Capital Programme and
Procurement
UK Power Networks

Prof Sadie Morgan OBE
Director
de Rijke Marsh Morgan Architects

Andy Murray
Executive Director
Major Projects Association

Jim O'Sullivan
Ex Highways England
Retired

Mike Robertson
Projects – Senior Risk Manager
Neom

Joanna Rowelle
Director
Arup

David Smith
Managing Director
Capital Dynamics

Programme Committee

(as at 31st July 22)

Chair

Nirmal Kotecha
Director of Capital Programme &
Procurement
UK Power Networks

Members

Trevor Birch
Partner
PA Consulting

Eleanor Bryan
Director
EY

Alistair Godbold
Senior Consultant
The Nichols Group

Eloise John
Regional Director, Water, Ports &
Power, UK & Ireland
AECOM

Bill McElroy
Head of Industry Strategy
Turner & Townsend

Frederick Mukonoweshuro
Associate Director
Arup

Andy Murray
Executive Director
Major Projects Association

Rising Star members

Tom Anderson
Senior Consultant
Moorhouse Consulting

Anna Jackson
Consultant
The Nichols Group

Studies Working Group

(as at 31st July 22)

Chair

Andy Murray
Executive Director
Major Projects Association

Members

Simon Addyman
Associate Professor
School of Construction & Project
Management UCL

Manon Bradley
Development Director
Major Projects Association

Jason Byrne
Partner
Moorhouse Consulting

Alan Couzens
Capital Portfolio Director
National Highways

Michèle Dix CBE
Non-Executive Director
Major Projects Association

Andrew Fotherby
MD Defence
Tetra Tech

Fredrick Levy
Programme Consultant
Turner & Townsend

Jonathan Norman
Knowledge Manager
Major Projects Association

Julian Ross
Senior Programme Manager
Network Rail

Odilon Serano
EUNA Collaboration Director
Mott MacDonald

Fiona Spencer
Director
Infrastructure & Projects Authority

Sian Thomas
Director of Engineering & Asset
Management
Network Rail Ltd

Nicola Thompson
Head of Customer Experience
The Oakland Group

Richard Zavitz
Principal Sponsor
Transport for London

Year in Action 2022



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