Meeting:	CONSTRUCT AGM
Date:	Thursday 24 June 2021
Time	4:00pm – 5:15pm
Location:	Zoom
Chairman:	Neil Marney
Paper:	Minutes

CONSTRUCT
CONCRETE STRUCTURES GROUP

Attendees

Neil	Marney	Chairman	Robert	Thompson	Morrisroe Group
Steve	Hammond	Anderson Group	Jenny	Burridge	MPA The Concrete Centre
Simon	Taylor	Byrne Bros	Martyn	Price	O'Halloran & O'Brien
Bradley	Barham	Careys Group	Tracy	Botley	O'Halloran & O'Brien
Paul	Johnson	Careys Group	Tom	Connell	Oliver Connell & Son
Warren	Underwood	Careys Group	Alasdair	Stables	PERI
Alistair	McDonald	Cementaid	Andy	Newton	Rapid EPS
Jonathan	Gibson	Constructing Solutions	Robert	Aitken	Real Time Civil
James	Hurst	Doka UK	Chris	Willett	Schoeck
Dennis	Keogh	Expanded	Simon	Bahaire	Swanton Consulting
Paul	Harrison	Fosroc			
Annette	Jones	Foundation Developments			
Tony	Sheehan	Getjar			
Sooren	Chinnapa	Ground Construction			
Derek	Brown	Invisible Connections			
Steve	Fordham	Invisible Connections			
Colleen	McCoy	J G McCoy			
Richard	Sanders	John F Hunt			
Grant	Tonks	M J Gallagher	Megan	Gee	CONSTRUCT
Hakim	Nazerali	Morrisroe Group	Dave	Armsworth	CONSTRUCT
Mark	Wadsworth	Morrisroe Group	Dave	Campbell	CONSTRUCT

Apologies

Aaron	O'Brien	The Formwork Company	Paul	Timlin	Coinford
Adrian	Starkey	Max Frank	Paul	Williams	Toureen Group
Alan	Dickinson	V J Technology	Richard	Day	The Concrete Centre
Alastair	Maciver	Michael J Gallagher	Robert	Moore	Byrne Bros
Carol	Herald	RMD Kwikform	Spencer	Tubb	Chryso
Damien	Meehan	Toureen Group	Stuart	Burns	Dura Composites
Emma	Barnett	Mabey Hire	Terry	Bradley	CCL
Erik	Remels	Kerkstoel	Tom	Scanlon	Modebest
Hugh	Byrne	Schwing Stetter	Trevor	Diviney	Ground Construction
Jason	Carey	Careys	Yvonne	Everest	Toureen Group
John	Hanlon	Master Builder Solutions	Zena	Tebboth	Pinner Risk Solutions
Kate	Pacey	Max Frank	Brian	Morrisroe	Morrisroe
Luke	Morley	RMD Kwikform	Alex	Warrington	Expanded
Mandy	Court	Miers Construction	Brian	Davis	Halfen
Marian	Thomasson	Trimble	Blair	Carswell	Huennebeck
Martin	Hemberger	Huennebeck	Jamie	Coyne	Specialist Risk

Matthew	Gilliver	CCL
Mick	Bray	Tamdown Group
Mike	Mungroosingh	Laing O'Rourke
Nathalie	Debusser	Kerkstoel
Patrik	Zosiak	Vertemax

1. Notice

The notice of the AGM was taken as read.

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2. Welcome & Apologies

CONSTRUCT Chairman, Neil Marney, welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that the apologies that had been received would be recorded in the minutes.

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3. Minutes of Last Meeting held on 10 September 2020 and Matters Arising

The Chairman proposed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 10 September 2020 should be accepted. This was seconded by Mark Wadsworth (Vice Chairman) and unanimously approved by CONSTRUCT Members.

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4. Chairman's Report

It's been another tough year for our businesses. COVID has stuck around for a lot longer than most of us thought, and this meeting, supposed to be in person, is another sign of how the pandemic has dragged on longer than we thought it would. Brexit has added more complications for our sector, many of which are just starting to rear their heads.

Sectors across the UK have been shut for months on end, but construction has been the sector that's toughed it out. We're still running our sites up and down the country in much more difficult conditions for social distancing, while juggling contractual disputes, managing labour shortages and wage & material cost inflation. We've been one of the few British industries that's been contributing to the economy, and government are often putting barriers in the way.

As for CONSTRUCT, we've continued to change our activity to support members thorough COVID and Brexit. Dave will give us a full update shortly, but it's clear we've really stepped up a notch in our influence with government. We've got the ear of the Construction Minister, being on calls with her each month. We've fed in your views to her and civil servants on labour shortage issues and the supply of materials. We're a strong and vocal voice within the Construction Leadership Council helping shape industry policy, collaboration and lobbying the government.

I've mentioned labour issues – I think this is the biggest issue we face as an industry over the months and years to come. Our recent survey of members showed that 100% of us are facing labour shortages of some kind, and more than half of us say the labour shortage is extremely acute. And this isn't just in the skilled trades like our formworkers, steel fixers, and groundworkers, it's general labour too. In the same survey you said wage inflation was on average 20% up, with extremes of 35% - this isn't sustainable and we've told the government to act quickly so we can bring labour in more easily and end the support for the self-employed in construction, when there clearly is an abundance of work.

But we can't solely rely on foreign labour moving forward. We're all going to have to train more domestic labour to come into the sector. The skills and training landscape is complicated, and CONSTRUCT's Concrete Frame Training Forum is working on schemes that mean it's much easier for us to find new entrants and have effective training.

We are working with the CLC to make the whole system of training easier to access too. We need a good feed of new labour that know what they are signing up for, before we invest in apprenticeships. CFTF is also on its way to becoming an Approved Training Organisation with CITB, which means we're able to draw down grant for members more easily and develop a suite of training programmes that develop concrete structures specialist skills.

The Health & Safety Committee continues its great work to make our sites – and our people – safer. Members have come together to develop safety guidance on form ties, edge protection, and concrete plant, as well as helping members with individual health & safety issues. We continue to collect accident stats to help you benchmark and we provide a confidential forum between members to share any accidents or near misses to ensure the industry can learn as a whole.

Since the start of this year, CONSTRUCT has also turned its focus to supporting Groundworks. There's been no trade body looking after groundworks, and most of our members undertake this type of work. The first committee meeting took place in March and set out its plans to develop good practice guidance, safer working practices, and training options. We encourage every contractor member to get involved and we hope that the committee's work will help encourage more into membership.

Despite the difficult period we're going through, we are still recruiting new members. We welcomed John F Hunt and Adana Construction plus a host of supplier members in the last year and we are seeing more members join this year across all categories. I thank all of you for continuing to support us, and was really pleased to see membership subscriptions being paid earlier than normal this year.

I know a big part of what we do is getting together – to network, to vent, to make new business partnerships – and with COVID that's all been on hold.

Despite our AGM today being pushed back online, which was due to be a networking drinks get together at the Building Centre, I hope that it will be the last of our meetings we have to move online, as I know how important it is to have that face-to-face interaction. We'll be rearranging this networking session in September. We hope to get at least some of our committee meetings back to face-to-face soon.

We will also be running our first Golf Session in partnership with the Lighthouse Club on 17 September. Laura who runs the Lighthouse golf club is with us today and will give us an update later, on how you can get involved. If we make this a success, we hope to be able to make this a regular fixture of the CONSTRUCT calendar.

We've also been a year without CONSTRUCT Day, with our big plans to move it to our new venue at Tobacco Dock. I'm really pleased that we are going ahead this year on Friday 1st October and you can book your tables now. We really need your support so please take a look at the sponsorship and premium supporter options – the proceeds don't just pay for the event but allow us reinvest the funds into the work CONSTRUCT does throughout the year.

And don't forget to enter the awards this year – we've been doing some amazing things in the last two years, so get those projects recognised. We've extended the deadline from this Friday, to Friday 16th July to give you a bit of extra time. Our people have been doing some brilliant things during this crisis too, so make sure you get them recognised for Young Achiever and Unsung Hero.

CONSTRUCT is also about to embark on a new chapter with it's secretariat, as Build UK will be winding down its provision of secretariat services to the five associations and training groups it currently provides services for. This of course also means CONSTRUCT will need to find new provisions to manage the association, but we'll be continuing to work with Dave and his team until the end of the year, and we will be consulting with you about who we manage CONSTRUCT so it's providing everything you as members need.

We're not out of the woods yet with COVID or Brexit, but CONSTRUCT will continue to be the voice of members. We will continue to take the government to task, work collaboratively with them and the wider industry to find workable solutions, and help members navigate it all with bespoke information and advice. Keep talking to us about the problems you're facing, to help us help you, and together we can make our industry better. Thank you.

5. Secretariat's Report

Neil Marney (Chairman) handed over to Dave Campbell (CONSTRUCT) to discuss the projects CONSTRUCT had been working on and its future plans.

Dave emphasised how lobbying government had been high on CONSRUCT's priorities over the last year in regards to COVID-19 and Brexit, and how CONSTRUCT had been a strong voice for the sector. CONSTRUCT has had a seat at the table with the Construction Leadership Council (CLC), CITB and government, as well as being on calls with the construction minister.

The government had been open to working with CONSTRUCT and CONSTRUCT had been able to make a difference within industry by working with government, as well as specialist sectors and the supply chain.

CONSTRUCT's communications had increased during the pandemic to ensure the sheer amount of information that was being released was reaching members in a concise and targeted manner, ensuring that Government's guidance was made specific to the concrete sector.

CONSTRUCT also launched a new website which updated and reorganised information and guidance, which can be found in the toolkit area, as well as member only information in the updated Members' Area. CONSTRUCT had also been working more with supplier members, partnering with members to deliver expert webinars and resources to the wider membership.

CONSTRUCT increased its social media volume to get information to a wider audience, and with an aim to recruit new members. CONSTRUCT had recruited a number of new members.

CONSTRUCT also had been increasing its communication with members, and included a regular spot in its monthly newsletter for its member interview series, where CONSTRUCT would interview a new member each month to find out what members were doing and the issues they were facing.
The Health & Safety Committee, ran by Dave Armsworth (CONSTRUCT), had been developing a lot of great resources, including guidance on formwork tie systems and an edge protection common practice guidance document. With the edge protection guidance document, CONSTRUCT was able to set the standard for edge protection without dictation from tier 1 contractors. This document was a good representation of how well membership could work together.

Dave Armsworth was also working with members to develop guidance on making plant concrete safer, and also continued to provide one-to-one support to members on individual member issues.

The Groundworks Committee launched in March and the second meeting would be taking place shortly after the AGM. Dave encouraged all members to get involved with the Committee to develop best practice and guidance specific to groundworks. Dave expressed how it is important to ensure that there is correct training in the groundworks trade, and also to promote the trade as a career to the next generation.

CONSTRUCT seeking to achieve CITB Approved Training Organisation (ATO) status, which would mean it would be able to draw funds directly from CITB for member training. The Concrete Frame Training Forum (CFTF) was developing a lot of standards with members, including a suite of standards for formwork suppliers. CONSTRUCT had a training hub on its website with guidance and information for members to access. CONSTRUCT is also working on career documents which would be used for school outreach.

CFTF would also continue to provide members with one-to-one training support and assistance in completing funding applications. Over the last six months, CFTF had secured £25k in training funds for members which had been fully utilised. CONSTRUCT has also had a voice within Build UK, CLC and government and had been shaping the conversation around training in the industry.

Going forwards, the labour crisis was going to be a focus. CONSTRUCT had been lobbying to government on the issue, as construction is a huge part of the economy and needed to be prioritised. CONSTRUCT called for clear and effective systems to train the next generation. CFTF would also be working on taster courses specific to the concrete structures industry so that the sector has a good funnel of people coming into its workforce. Careers can be promoted through platforms such as the Construction Talent Retention Scheme and Go Construct.

Upcoming events included CONSTRUCT Day. Dave thanked the event sponsors which included PERI (Gold sponsor), Causeway Technologies and RMD Kwikform (Silver sponsors), Ischebeck Titan (Health & Safety Award sponsor) and the Post-tensioning Association (Post-Tensioning Award sponsor). Dave encouraged more members to get involved in the event through sponsorship, as the 2021 was set out to be fantastic event with more space and entertainment as it broke away from the mould of The Brewery to the new venue, Tobacco Dock. CONSTRUCT had also partnered up with its official charity, Lighthouse Club, to put on a Charity Golf Day for members. The event would be held on Friday 17 September in Hertfordshire, and Dave encouraged members to book teams and raise money for the cause.

5. Financial Statements for Year Ending 31 December 2020

The Chairman directed members to the accounts for the financial year ending 31 December 2020.

The Chairman proposed that the financial statements for 2020 be received. This was seconded by Martyn Price (O'Halloran & O'Brien) and unanimously supported by CONSTRUCT Members.

6. Appointment of Auditors

Members were informed that while CONSTRUCT does not need to be audited, it is required to have financial statements prepared.

This year the voting for the appointment of the Auditors was conducted online ahead of the meeting. It was proposed that the current auditors Harrison, Beale & Owen continued in their role.

26 votes were cast, with 25 voting 'For', there was 1 'Abstention', and 2 of the votes were disqualified (as incomplete) and therefore, Harrison, Beale & Owen were reappointed as Auditors.

7. Election of Council 2019/20

In accordance with the CONSTRUCT Articles of Association, the Council shall consist of: a Chairman, Vice Chairman, up to a further 5 Concrete Frame Contractor members, two client members, one consultant member, three Supplier Members, and one member representing an Industry Association.

The voting for the election of Council and the Company Directors took place online ahead of this meeting. There were nominations submitted for Chairman, Vice Chairman, Concrete Frame Contractor, Supplier and Industry Association Representatives.

3 Concrete Frame Contractor nominations were received for 5 places, which did not include those running for Chairman and Vice Chairman. A late nomination was received from Patrick Boyle (MPB Structures) to fill one of the Concrete Frame Contractor places, and as there were vacancies, this nomination was accepted. A vote was held on the call to elect Patrick to the Council and become a Director of CONSTRUCT, in addition to the candidates on the ballot.

Members were asked to raise their hand to vote 'For', 'Against' or 'Abstain'. There was a clear majority that voted in favour of Patrick joining the Council, and he was therefore duly elected.

28 votes were cast, 2 of those votes were disqualified (as incomplete), leaving 26 valid votes.

The results confirmed that Neil Marney (Marney Construction) was re-elected as CONSTRUCT Chairman. Mark Wadsworth (A J Morrisroe & Sons) was re-elected as Vice Chairman.

The four Concrete Frame Contractor members elected on to Council were:

1. Dennis Keogh – Expanded
2. Patrick Boyle – MPB Structures
3. Martyn Price – O'Halloran and O'Brien
4. Tom Connell – Oliver Connell & Son

All Concrete Frame Contractor Council members were also elected as CONSTRUCT company directors.

The three Supplier members elected on to Council were:

1. Paul Harrison – Fosroc
2. Colleen McCoy – McCoy Engineering
3. Alasdair Stables – PERI

Jenny Burridge (Concrete Centre) was re-elected for the industry association place on the Council.

The Chairman welcomed Tom Connell (Oliver Connell & Son) and Patrick Boyle (MPB Structures) who were newly appointed to the Council, and thanked Phil Petz (Byrne Bros) and Steve Hemsley (Stephenson Group) for their time served on the Council before stepping down from their positions.

9. Member Discussion on Plans and Priorities

Neil Marney (Chairman) prompted the discussion by raising the issue of labour shortages and the cost inflation of labour. He questioned members on what the plan would be going forwards and whether clients needed to be addressed to make them aware of the cost inflation of projects.

Martyn Price (O'Halloran & O'Brien) suggested that the labour crisis might show a different outcome once the pandemic started to ease and furlough finished, as there remained the issue of workers claiming furlough when they were able to work. Martyn stated that 13% of construction workers were claiming furlough. The issue alongside that was that the UK construction industry has had an over reliance on European labour and there is a need to attract new labour. Martyn believed that CONSTRUCT had a pivotal role to play in attracting new labour into the industry.

Neil agreed that there was an issue with workers claiming furlough pay, and that government had a role to play in this issue, as the criteria for claiming furlough was flawed. Martyn agreed. Neil then directed a question to Alistair Stables (PERI), and asked why Marney Construction was unable to get stock from PERI. Alastair explained that there was currently a global timber shortage, and that the raw material feed from factories was not there. Timber was being rationed, and the factories had explained that this crisis was going to continue for at least three months. The issue is that the industry had gone through a long period of low demand, and it was extremely unfortunate that as the pandemic started to end, this coincided with a global material shortage.

Steve Hammond (Anderson Group) acknowledged the materials crisis but asked what the industry was going to do in terms of alternatives. Alistair said they were moving to other products, for example aluminium, as aluminium was being least effected by the shortage. Steve expressed how clients would only be able to deal with this so long before a recession.

Neil directed another question to members on the call, asking if any member had received resistance from clients and if any projects had been shelled due to cost inflation. Steve did not believe that projects were being shelled as there was still plenty of work out there, but he did state that clients were slowing down the supply chain as projects were moving too quickly. This was a result of cash flow issues, as Steve didn't believe the chain was moving any quicker.

Colleen McCoy (J G McCoy) shared with members research she had come across in regards to recyclable plastics, and asked the question of whether recyclable plastics would be an alternative.

Neil explained that although a lot of research has gone into the development of recyclable plastics, the construction industry was archaic and relied on timber, aluminium and steel products. Steve agreed with Neil, and worried that alternatives would be too time consuming and costly.

Derek Brown (Invisible Connections) posed a question to the group on how bids for materials were put together. He explained that contractors ask for fixed prices for dates years in advance,

and that as a supplier, Invisible Connections were only able to give an answer full of caveats. He asked supplier members how this information was being presented to clients as they are difficult questions to answer in normal times, and almost impossible to answer in the current climate.

Steve explained that contractors put their own caveats on the costs in the same way suppliers do. He explained that this is where the cost inflations would arise and the increases should not be accepted.

Derek also explained that the industry is too reliant on one major producer, and that their only competition in the market is from inputs and this comes with its own set of issues.

Tom Connell (Oliver Connell & Son) redirected the conversation back to labour, asking membership where they thought the next generation of labour would come from and whether they thought the industry could reply on UK labour alone. Tom explained that he had visited many sites, and estimated about 20 out of 1000 workers were likely to come from the UK. Neil agreed that this remained an issue and had done for years, and explained that one of the reasons for this was how the next generation had been raised. It was agreed by members that the next generation were being directed to higher education and University, rather than through a trade.

Steve stated that the industry hadn't invested enough in the next generation, and instead had seen foreign labour as an easy and cheap solution. Mark Wadsworth (Vice Chairman) added that the next generation were not aware of the earning opportunities in construction, and that it is partly within CITB's remit to make schools and colleges aware of how the industry had changed.

Sooren Chinnapa (Ground Construction) explained that he was carrying out doctoral research on the issue, which focussed on how to attract people into the construction industry. He carried out research amongst students, and realised that students did not have a good idea of what people earn in the construction industry. Awareness of this needed to be made to students.

Richard Sanders (John F Hunt) agreed and stated that there is an assumption that if you join the industry as a labourer you would remain as a labourer. The message needed to be that you can join the construction industry with little formal education and work your way up to a high-level position just through working in the role. He explained that young people associate a university degree with higher wages, but the construction industries is one of few industries where this did not ring true.

Steve also suggested that government should look at introducing construction into curriculums at primary schools, and not just target senior schools. Younger children would be a lot more likely to go home and talk to their parents about what they have learnt, which would also influence the parents.

Annette Jones (Foundation Developments) raised that she had been contacted by Government in regards to a carbon surcharge for all concrete suppliers coming into force from 1 July 2021. Members on the call were not aware of this introduction, and Jenny Burridge (MPA The Concrete Centre) offered to look into this and feedback to members.

Neil thanked members for their input into a very insightful conversation and drew the discussion to a close.

Action	**Secretariat and Jenny Burridge (MPA The Concrete Centre) to investigate carbon surcharge.**

10.	**Any Other Business**	
	a) Future Meetings	
	Friday 17 September 2021 – Charity Golf Day – Hanbury Manor, Hertfordshire Friday 1 October 2021 – CONSTRUCT Day & Awards – Tobacco Dock, London	
	The Chairman closed the AGM and thanked CONSTRUCT Members for their attendance and continued support of CONSTRUCT.	