

In brief

ANDY FORD JOINS LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

Former CIBSE President Andy Ford has joined London South Bank University (LSBU) as professor of systems engineering in the built environment.

Formerly technical director at Mott MacDonald and a founder of Fulcrum Consulting, Ford said his focus would be on helping the university 'develop courses for future engineers that embrace holistic systems thinking and cross discipline boundaries'.

'We will aim to empower our students to play their part fully in addressing the challenge society faces in a resource constrained world, as we struggle to cope with both an expanding urban population and dangerous climate change,' he added.

INDUSTRY 'NEEDS MULTI-DISCIPLINARY FOCUS'

Building engineering sector firms must take a 'complete and multi-disciplinary' view to prosper, according to the new president of the Building and Engineering Services Association (B&ES) Bruce Bisset.

He said the 'long and ferocious economic downturn' had created unprecedented change, which was also fuelled by 'technological advances, improved working practices and the emergence of the low-carbon economy'.

B&ES members also chose Andy Sneyd, of Crown House Technologies, as president elect, and Jim Marner of Shepherd Engineering Services, as vice-president. Roderick Pettigrew has also been appointed chief executive of B&ES, succeeding Blane Judd.

AWARDS GET NEW BACKER

Renewable heating and air conditioning supplier Daikin UK has joined Ruskin Air Management and Lochinvar as a sponsor of this year's CIBSE Young Engineers' Awards.

Taking place on 9 October 2013 at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in London, the awards scheme combines the CIBSE ASHRAE Graduate of the Year and CIBSE Employer of the Year awards.



Andrew Cooper (left) and Bill Bordass (right) took part in the debate

DECs need fixing not replacing

● CIBSE Energy Performance Group debate backs Display Energy Certificates

Display Energy Certificates (DECs) are far from perfect, but remain the best way currently available for clients to assess the performance of their buildings, a lively CIBSE debate has agreed.

Andy Stanton, of Transport for London, urged other clients to use DECs as widely as possible at CIBSE Energy Performance Group's Great DEC Debate. 'There are lots of claims made about building performance that are not backed up by any data,' he told the debate, which was hosted by the CIBSE Energy Performance Group at the London headquarters of Legal & General.

Ahead of the discussion, the Better Buildings Partnership (BBP), which represents major London developers, reiterated its desire for DECs to be made mandatory on all buildings.

However, commercial property consultant Andrew Cooper said it would not get the result it hoped for because the current system was flawed.

'DECs are good in theory, but the methodology is not

good enough,' he said. 'They are not operated by the government and are not supported by the industry in their current form.'

The fact that they only have to be renewed every 10 years makes them 'worth even less than an EPC [Energy Performance Certificate]', he added.

However, Bill Bordass, of the Usable Buildings Trust, said DECs were broken, but needed 'fixing not replacing'. He urged the government to show more enthusiasm for performance benchmarking as that would demonstrate the value of DECs and improve awareness of energy use in buildings.

Lack of enforcement is undermining the DEC system, according to BSRIA's Rod Bunn, who described DECs as a 'dead end'. 'We need to close the feedback loop between handover and building operation,' he added.

'DECs in their current form will not transform the market,' said Bunn. 'We need something better.'

However, Stanton said more private-sector building owners should 'mandate DECs' as that would deliver the volume of energy data needed to change the government's mind about rolling-out DECs across the whole building stock.

Better predictions can close gap

The performance gap is often exaggerated because designers don't always carry out the accurate estimates of operational energy use at the design stage, according to a new CIBSE guide.

TM54 suggests that many buildings are not performing as well as hoped because actual energy use is being compared to the Part L calculation, which is not an appropriate tool for predicting energy use.

Dave Cheshire, AECOM regional director and co-author of the Technical Memorandum, said: 'The calculations used to demonstrate compliance with Part L are

not intended as predictions of operational energy use'

CIBSE TM54 *Evaluating Operational Energy Use at the Design Stage* explains the differences between Part L

Part L is not an appropriate tool to demonstrate energy use

calculations and estimates of energy use, based on realistic assumptions.

It gives examples of how to run scenarios and recommends that the sensitivity of different

options is tested to determine the potential range of performance.

The guidance suggests how to present the results by running different scenarios to reflect the level of uncertainty of the estimates.

Cheshire said: 'The aim of the guidance is to enable designers to make better estimates of operational energy, identify the range of possible outcomes and, therefore, show how designs can be improved to deliver on the predictions'.

An article on TM54 will be in the next *CIBSE Journal* and the guidance will be out later this year.