

## Frise joins City of London taskforce

3 years ago



The City of London Corporation has invited Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) chief executive David Frise to play a key role on a taskforce set up to address skills shortages in engineering and construction.

He is joining 14 other business leaders on the [Skills for a Sustainable Skyline Taskforce](#) which will look at defining and addressing skills gaps around the construction, retrofit and maintenance of low carbon commercial buildings across the capital.

David will work with other experts from the commercial built environment, including local authorities, central government, employers, and training providers.

The taskforce has been set up in response to growing alarm about the shortage of skilled people available to help the corporation achieve its net zero carbon targets. It will run for three years, and its findings will be shared with other cities facing similar problems including Birmingham, Cardiff, Manchester, and Glasgow.

It will be chaired by Chris Hayward, who is deputy chairman of the City Corporation's Policy and Resources Committee and follows a poll of built environment professionals which revealed the depth of concern over a lack of suitably skilled workers to deliver sustainable building projects.

### Diversity

91% of respondents to the poll said the commercial built environment sector lacked sufficient skilled workers to achieve net zero targets. 80% identified poor workplace diversity as a critical underlying weakness.

The City of London Corporation has committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions across its operations by 2027, and to support the achievement of net zero for the Square Mile financial district by 2040.

"Central London urgently needs a larger skilled workforce to decarbonise its commercial buildings and this

taskforce will lead the way in finding solutions to fill this skills gap,” said Hayward. “We must work at pace to attract new talent as well as upskill and reskill the existing workforce as we look to meet our ambitious climate action goals.”

He said the group had already identified the full development lifecycle, including design, retrofit, construction and maintenance as top priorities for skills action.

“Anyone involved in the built environment right now will recognise this problem,” said Frise. “We have a strong vision for the future and many of the technologies and processes for moving towards net zero, but our Achilles’ heel is our shortage of skilled people.

“I am delighted that BESA has been asked to play an important part in this vital exercise. Working with senior people from such a wide commercial and construction community will help increase our understanding of the nature of skills shortages and help us shape further initiatives for our sector.

“However, I am equally mindful that we must move fast and share learning quickly with other regions and other professions in our supply chains.”

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