

Mott MacDonald appoints James Harris as executive chair and Cathy Travers as Group managing director

4 years ago



Mott MacDonald has announced that James Harris will be its new Group executive chair, succeeding Mike Haigh who retires from the role after 42 years with the global engineering, management and development consultancy.

Cathy Travers will take over from James as Group managing director for the £2bn employee-owned business. They will begin their new roles on 1 August 2022. Mike will continue to support Mott MacDonald and the wider industry through influencing roles including his position as chair of the influential World Economic Forum Infrastructure Industries Governors Group and as a member of the FIDIC Global Leadership Forum Advisory Board.

Like Mike, both James and Cathy have spent their entire careers with Mott MacDonald and since taking senior leadership positions have played key roles in the consultancy's successful business strategy.

As Group managing director James has made a pivotal contribution to Mott MacDonald's strong operational performance worldwide, especially in leading its successful response to COVID-19. He has also been instrumental in shaping our award-winning approach to equality, diversity and inclusion – galvanising colleague engagement and championing collaboration with our clients to advance improvements in the wider industry.

In her role as managing director of Mott MacDonald's UK and Europe region, Cathy has led a diverse team of 8000 employees delivering infrastructure projects across transport, water, energy and the built

environment. Since joining our executive board in January 2022 she has also continued to promote a culture of inclusivity, champion our wellbeing and mental health programmes and play a leading role in developing our early career professionals.

Paying tribute to Mike, James said: “Mike has been an integral part of Mott MacDonald for over 40 years. As executive chair he has successfully developed our business, guiding it through the pandemic and many changes including our digital transformation, a greater emphasis on technical and professional excellence, increased focus on social outcomes and greater profile in the industry – all ensuring the company’s strong position for the future.”

“I’m very proud and honoured to have been chosen as Mike’s successor to lead an organisation I’ve been passionately committed to all my working life. I am continually astounded by the sheer ingenuity of our people and their energetic dedication to achieving sustainable, resilient solutions to the challenges we face around the world. I’m excited at the prospect of building on what Mike has achieved: delivering on our purpose, advancing our technical excellence, strengthening our client partnerships and supporting our people in developing rewarding careers,” James added.

Cathy said: “We’re all extremely grateful to Mike for his passion, commitment and dedication to Mott MacDonald which has helped create the talent, culture, creativity and innovation we are well known for today. It’s great to know that Mike will be continuing to champion the sector and Mott MacDonald through his continuing involvement in industry wide roles.”

“I am absolutely delighted and very proud to be appointed as Mott MacDonald’s next managing director. It’s a hugely exciting time to be taking over the operational leadership of such a fantastic company and I’m very much looking forward to working with our global teams to continue to deliver great outcomes for our clients and communities, our company and our people,” Cathy added.