

Incoming President calls for Engineering Leadership

3 years ago



“We have never before needed more engineers, more urgently, to provide creative solutions to the challenges we face,” said Adrian Catchpole, incoming president of CIBSE in his Presidential address, outlining the challenges presented by climate change and building safety considerations.

“Our leadership is needed now if we are going to have the impact required. This spans both our individual responsibilities and those of whole organisations. As engineers, we must help move the built environment from being a significant contributor to global emissions, to an exemplar of how to reduce them. Each one of us needs to step out of our comfort zone, step forward with solutions; and commit to ‘taking a lead’”.

Catchpole’s leadership theme was driven by the need to deliver an urgent response to climate change. He highlighted that in 2022, global carbon emissions rose by a further 0.9% to 36.8 billion tonnes despite all of our efforts to date.

“It’s quite a task, but we still have time and all around the world, I know there are engineers (many of them in our own CIBSE family) with the knowledge and expertise to deliver the further step changes we need. Building Services Engineers now need to be prepared to lead those changes.”

Catchpole also highlighted CIBSE’s leadership role in developing the UK Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard, which he said would enable industry to “robustly” demonstrate that their net assets are truly net zero.

Attracting new young engineers to the profession will be vital to delivering these zero carbon solutions so Catchpole was pleased to be able to use his address to launch a new CIBSE STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Ambassador scheme, in partnership with STEM Learning. This will support

volunteers to attract new entrants in all CIBSE regions, including the UK, Ireland, Hong Kong, ANZ and UAE. He challenged all CIBSE regions “to have 10 registered, and active STEM Ambassadors by the end of May next year”.

Catchpole’s address also referred to the Building Safety Act, which he described as “a hugely significant piece of legislation”. He said that CIBSE would be bringing forward guidance to support implementation of the Act, together with details of a new CIBSE Chartered Organisation Programme, that will facilitate the demonstration of competence.

Adrian Catchpole succeeds Kevin Mitchell as CIBSE President and will in turn be succeeded by Fiona Cousins, CIBSE President Elect.

The Presidential Address was delivered in person at the CIBSE AGM which took place on 13 June 2023 at the Royal Society, London and online.

You can read it in full via <https://www.cibse.org/about-cibse/governance/our-people/cibse-president>