

Helen Hare elected president of the British Council for Offices

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Helen Hare, director of projects at GPE, has been elected president of the [British Council for Offices \(BCO\)](#) with immediate effect. She succeeds Peter Crowther, chief executive of Tatton Estate and co-founder of HERE.

Andy McBain, head of future of workspace & design at NatWest Group, takes over from Helen as vice president, while John Wright, director at Stride Treglown, becomes junior vice president.

Helen has more than 30 years' experience in the construction and property industry and is responsible for the design and delivery of all projects across GPE's development, refurbishment and flex working programmes.

Having started her career as a quantity surveyor, she joined GPE as project manager in 2007 and was appointed director of projects in 2019. She has a proven track record in the successful delivery of major development projects, including GPE's largest mixed-use development at Rathbone Square in Fitzrovia, 12/14 New Fetter Lane and 33 Margaret Street.

Helen holds responsibility for four teams across GPE and is currently responsible for circa £1bn of new development, refurbishment and fit-out work. In recent years Helen has led her teams to deliver some of the most sustainable buildings in the sector and market- leading circular economy initiatives, delivering and, in some cases, exceeding GPE's net zero targets.

As well as her deep understanding of the importance of effective design, Helen has a passion for unlocking the potential of young people in the real estate sector. Alongside her BCO work, she is a regular speaker at industry events and prior to taking up her presidency role, acted as a mentor for The Circle Partnership; an

organisation which seeks to address the gender diversity gap at senior leadership level in the built environment.

Helen said: “This is an incredibly exciting time not just for the BCO, but for the office sector. With our refreshed focus on the whole life cycle, you will hear us reference design, develop *and* operate much more – building on what we debated at this year’s conference in Milan and the clear evidence that offices matter to us as humans – and the amazing fresh talent we have coming into our sector. Again building on our gallery wall in Milan, which encompassed some of the great work that our membership undertakes, data capture and sharing is high on my agenda for the year ahead.”

Vice president Andy McBain is also a strong advocate of mentoring, having helped set up the BCO’s NextGen Scotland group following his appointment to the BCO Scotland committee in 2011. At NatWest, he leads on workplace experience and cultural change across the group and is at the heart of the bank’s new office designs and future of the office strategies. Andy also led the publication of the BCO’s research paper on customer experience in the sector, *Towards Experience Utopia* and launch of a new customer experience award.

Andy said: “I really enjoyed being part of the customer experience research in 2024 and the launch of the new BCO Customer Experience Award is an exciting step, supporting BCO members across the full property lifecycle, from design and development to operation. In addition, seeing the NextGen’s growth over the last 15 years has been amazing. The BCO’s NextGen community continues to expand, flourish and add value across our regional and specialist committees.

“It has been a great pleasure to work alongside Peter this past year and I look forward to seeing all that Helen will achieve as BCO President.”

Sustainability will be a continued focus for the BCO Presidential Team, with junior vice president John Wright bringing valuable experience in this field. He has a deep interest in sustainable design and leads teams of architects and interior designers across the UK from Stride Treglown’s offices in Bristol – a city he is particularly passionate about.

John said: “The BCO has an important role to play in continuing to drive ESG in offices, and it is great to be part of the team shaping the conversation. Sustainability has evolved massively during my time in the industry, but we must keep challenging, not just in sustainable development and retrofit, but also championing social impact and great placemaking.”

Commenting on the latest appointments, BCO chief executive Samantha McClary said: “The BCO wouldn’t be what it is without the wonderful members who give up their time to drive our mission forward. Our presidential team commits so much time, effort and passion to making sure that everything the BCO does is for the betterment of this most vital part of our industry. I couldn’t be more grateful to them.

“I am particularly excited to be stepping into my new role as chief executive of the BCO at the same time that Helen steps into the presidential role. We share the same passion for people being the central and most important element in driving our sector forward and I can’t wait to see what we can deliver together.”

She added: “Huge thanks goes to Pete too for being such a strong president, delivering a sell-out conference in Birmingham, and for being so welcoming to this new CEO”