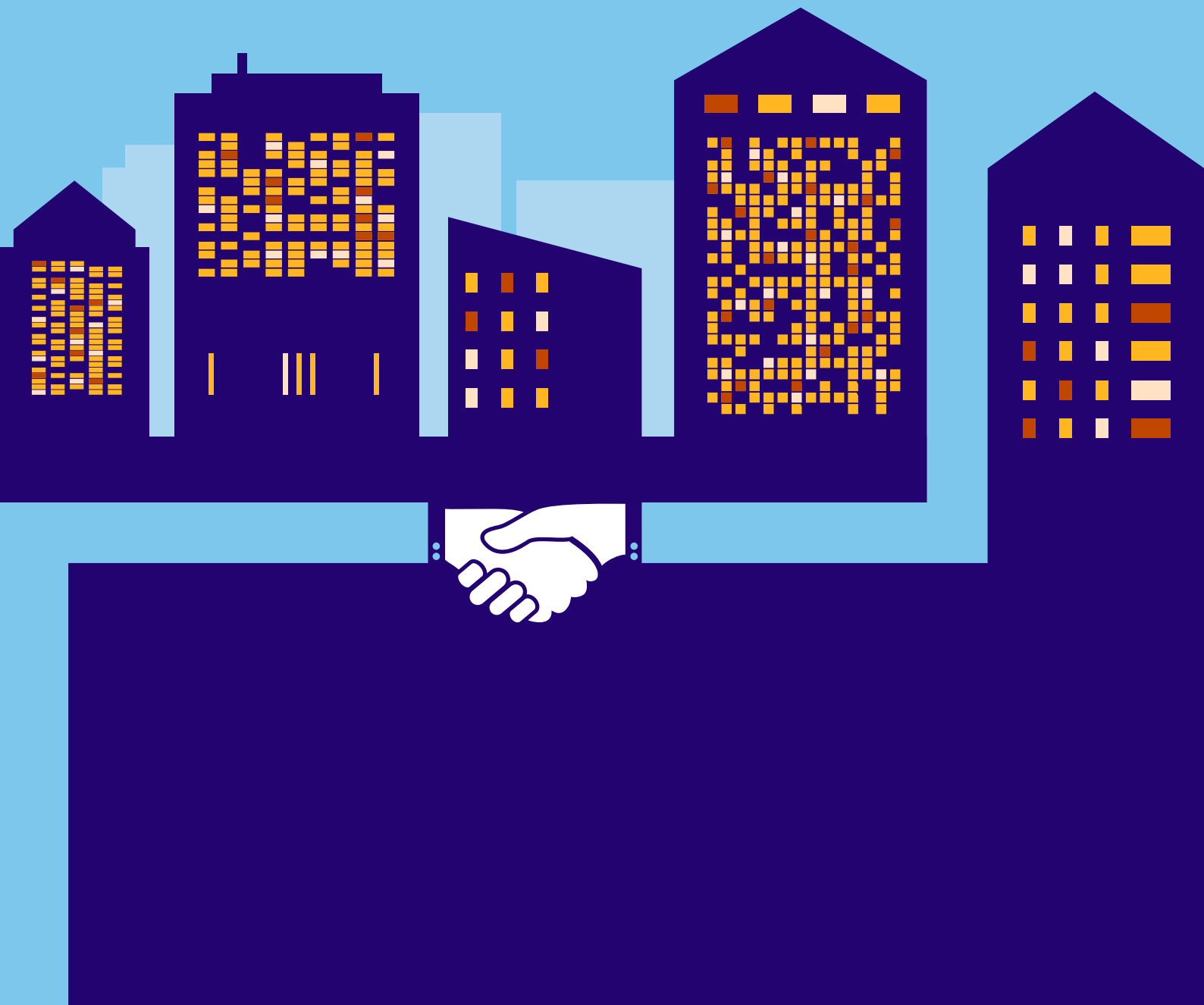


UNDERSTANDING  
THE VALUE OF  
**PROFESSIONALS AND  
PROFESSIONAL BODIES**



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# Foreword

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Our members would not be human if they didn't wonder sometimes what they actually get out of their subscriptions. It is good that they do. It keeps us on our toes.



In truth there is not a quick and easy answer. They get status, they improve their chances of promotion, they tie into a network of fellow professionals, they are sent regular information and their understanding of the key issues in their profession is kept fresh.

That's a reasonable package. But in truth much more of the value that professional bodies provide goes unnoticed. It is easy to take this work for granted.

The true value of professional bodies can only really be gauged when we consider a world without them. So while nobody claims professional bodies are perfect, I suggest as you read you consider this: Who would fill the gap if they were not there?

Professional bodies, certainly in construction, are today far more important to the future of their professions and the welfare of the nation than they have been for a very long while. The opportunities and challenges facing UK construction professions are great. Professional bodies have a crucial role to play in making sure their members are able to seize the opportunities and squarely meet the challenges.

The swell in global construction is immense, pumped up by emerging nations rapidly building the infrastructure they need to take them from predominantly under-developed economies to industrial nations. This is generating fantastic opportunities both at home and abroad for UK professionals as these nations seek to service the demand.

In tandem with this expansion in construction abroad we are seeing UK professional bodies, such as the CIOB, ICE, RIBA and RICS, spreading and increasing their international membership. This provides much needed support for the nationals of those countries who come into membership, be they from China, the Middle East or elsewhere. It also enhances opportunities for UK professionals as their global networks and influence widen and as standards and practices they work to are adopted around the world.

As this report makes plain, the government's desire to increase productivity through increasing high-paid jobs

is well served by boosting the export of professional services within an increasingly global construction market place.

Meanwhile, technology is driving rapid change in how professionals go about their business, fundamentally altering the way they work and interact. In construction, technologies such as BIM (Building Information Modelling) are predicted to have a profound impact both on the construction process and end product.

Such technological change presents tough challenges not just for the professionals themselves but also for their institutions. There is a need to adapt, but how best to reshape for the future? These are challenges the professional bodies will have to take on as they seek to support their members.

But as they do, professional bodies must answer to three masters: their members; the industry large; and the public interest. These must be balanced to take as clear a view as possible into the future for the advancement of their profession.

A remarkable fact is that the structure of high level professional education and qualifications has developed with little, if any, taxpayers' money. With the changes that have taken place in education and training over the last fifty years, professional bodies have tended to provide, through their qualifications, a consistent benchmark.

This report highlights how professional bodies in construction support improvements within the industry, within the profession and for the public good. It also highlights the challenges faced and points to where we can improve what we do.

So, while it is a tough challenge to accurately quantify the true social and economic value of a professional body, I hope that this document provides you with a better understanding of where the value lies and where there is potential for professional bodies to enhance the value they deliver.

**Chris Blythe, Chief Executive, CIOB**

# Foreword

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Before considering the value that professionals provide, it's important to provide some socioeconomic context.



By 2025 the global construction market is forecast to be worth \$15 trillion, with 60% of this growth in China, India and the United States alone.<sup>1</sup> Alongside this, world population is forecast to grow to 9.7 billion by 2050, and the proportion of people living in urbanised areas is expected to rise from 54% now to 66% in 2050.<sup>2</sup>

With an ever-increasing population living in cities, the demand for homes, workplaces and infrastructure, including sanitation, power and clean water, will place an enormous significance on the need for sustainable construction solutions and the skills and products that are required to deliver them.

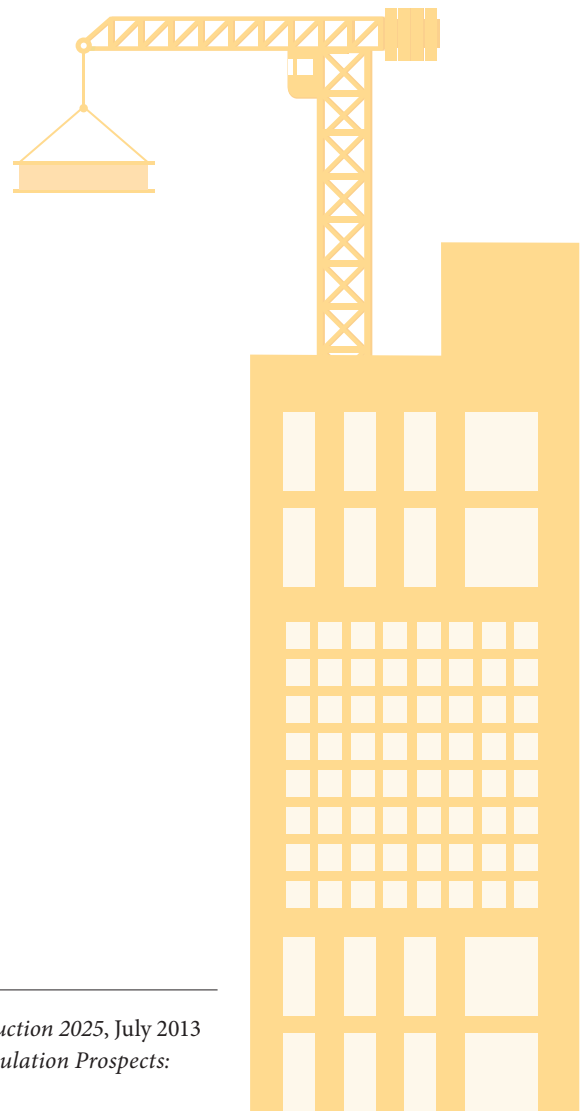
This demand highlights the key role professionals have to play in ensuring that the public interest is best served wherever they are in the world. The role of professional bodies in defining the global standards that support best practice, and in providing the education and qualifications that are recognised worldwide as benchmarks of excellence, is absolutely critical to achieve that. Ultimately, global construction professionalism in the future will be underpinned by a duty to make great places for people and the planet.

In my own career I have worked for contractor and consultant, on construction and design side, and on projects teams advising both industry and client. Without a professional qualification and the advantages and skills this brings, I would not have been able to apply new approaches and new thinking, often drawn from international practice, to achieve successful end results.

As seen in this report's findings among both the general public and MPs, trustworthiness is what defines professionals more than any other factor. It is this trust that is absolutely imperative; in the construction industry, we build and maintain structures that can last for generations and affect the quality of life for so many people.

The challenges that professional bodies face will inevitably impact on the way professionals themselves operate – but I know that we are ready to tackle change head-on. In doing so we can provide better value for the industry, for clients, for the wider profession and, vitally, for the public benefit.

**Paul Nash MSc, FCIQB, Senior Vice President, CIOB**



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<sup>1</sup> Global Construction Perspectives and Oxford Economics, *Global Construction 2025*, July 2013

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Population Prospects: the 2015 revision*, July 2015

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## METHODOLOGY

This report has been supported by two pieces of quantitative research to gain insight into both the public and parliamentary understanding of professional bodies. This has been used to inform the research and gain a firmer grasp of how professional bodies can improve the value they deliver.

CIOB commissioned a survey to gain insight into the knowledge among the general public about professional bodies. ComRes interviewed 2,012 British adults online between 15 and 16 July 2015. Data were weighted to be representative of all British adults aged 18+.

CIOB also commissioned a survey of MPs to gain insight into their understanding and views of professional bodies, especially within construction. ComRes interviewed 152 MPs online and by self-completion paper questionnaire between 9 June and 1 August 2015. Data were weighted by party and region to be representative of the House of Commons.

Findings from the research have been used throughout the report and a full breakdown and analysis of these results are available on pages 25 to 31.

Full data tables are available on the ComRes website at [www.comres.co.uk](http://www.comres.co.uk)



# WHAT ARE PROFESSIONAL BODIES?

PARN, the Professional Associations Research Network, an organisation that supports professional bodies such as CIOB and many others within the built environment sector, has a definition of a professional body.

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“They are dedicated to the advancement of the knowledge and practice of professions through developing, supporting, regulating and promoting professional standards for technical and ethical competence.”

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It goes on to say:

“In this they are all concerned with the public benefit as well as the reputation of professionals. They aim to maintain and develop professionalism and thereby securing high quality professional services for society.”

According to PARN there are approximately 400 professional bodies in the UK which between them represent 13 million professionals. It divides them into three types or organisation:

- ▶ Professional associations
- ▶ Regulatory bodies
- ▶ Learned societies

Some professional bodies combine these organisational functions. For others the functions are undertaken by clearly differentiated organisations.

## Why are they important?

Central to the purpose of professional bodies is to provide trust.

For the layperson, even for experts, gauging the potential quality of the service offered by a professional can be extremely hard without the benefit of previous experience. The damage of choosing, say, the wrong doctor, lawyer, engineer or accountant could be immense.

Professional bodies set standards, technical and ethical, that must be achieved and they ensure that they are maintained and enhanced through the professional's career. This supports the public's trust.

Beyond this they seek to raise the standards of the profession, increase understanding and protect the public interest. Through this they build social and economic capital.

The recent Edge Commission Report *Collaboration for Change*, which looked at the future of professionalism in construction, pulled together an impressive list of reasons why professions and their institutions are important (see Appendix B).

It concluded:

“Taken together, these attributes and actions add up to a powerful reason for being on the part of the institutions, and a reason for belonging on the part of individual members; and they still represent the core of a valuable differentiation from those who practise outside the organised professions.”

# INTRODUCTION

This document describes how professional bodies deliver social and economic value, particularly in relation to construction.

We have steered away from providing a financial cost-benefit analysis. Rather we have outlined how the activity of professional bodies translates into positive policies.

It would be both impractical and inevitably misleading to present a cash figure as an accurate indicator of the total net value provided by professional bodies, or a particular professional body, to society and the economy. It could only ever be imprecise. Any value stated would depend on the conditions of the day and would not hold true over time.

In part this is because the challenges facing professional bodies change over time, sometimes rapidly. One of their great strengths is that they adjust to ever-changing conditions and tailor their efforts to suit the needs of the day. The value of a professional body therefore varies according to how successful it is in addressing specific needs at any given point in time.

The true value of a professional body can in reality only ever be tested against the counterfactual statement: what if it didn't exist?

This in part is because the foundation block on which most professional bodies build is trust. Measuring trust and the impact of increased trust is far from straightforward. We know, however, how severe the consequences of breached trust can be. We know also that without trust, society and the economy could not function as it does today.

That said, it is of course possible and desirable to look at particular aspects of the work of professional bodies and evaluate their cost effectiveness. PARN has reported on this within its annual reviews.

This document, however, seeks simply to illustrate how value is provided by professional bodies, in particular those with members operating within the built environment. The reader can assess the scale of that value and on that basis might estimate the cost to individuals and the nation if this or that professional body did not exist.

Before looking at the value provided by professional bodies, it is first worth looking at how they are constituted and to understand how the individual functions work to deliver benefits.

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## The true value of a professional body can in reality only ever be tested against the counterfactual statement: what if it didn't exist?

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In essence, many if not most professional bodies have a similar structure and similar functions. These can be seen in Figure 1 and are described in the associated box. Not all bodies will have all of these functions; they may not for instance have a particularly strong international element. But they will share most of the same features.

It is important to note that with professional bodies, as membership organisations, there is a vast amount of voluntary input from the members that augments the work done by the full-time staff.

According to PARN in the recently published document '*The professional body sector contribution to social infrastructure*', professional bodies are supported by nine volunteers on average for every full-time employee.

Much of the oversight, governance and policy making rests on the active involvement of the membership. In general there will be member councils guiding all the major functions as well a general council covering strategy and oversight for the professional body as a whole.

However, while these bodies are structured along fairly straightforward functional lines, it is important to note that it is the whole more than the individual elements of



a professional body that ultimately makes them socially and economically useful.

For this reason we have looked at the benefits that professional bodies bring under five broad headings that map the themes that we see as pertinent to policy makers today.

- ▶ Productivity
- ▶ Social mobility
- ▶ Governance and ethical standards
- ▶ International
- ▶ Policy formation

Figure 1

## Typical structure of a professional body



### Membership & employer engagement

Cultivates and maintains relationships with members, both individual and corporate, also acting as a contact point for queries.

### Legal & governance

Professional bodies that have been granted a Royal Charter are responsible to the Privy Council for ensuring that their activities are in accordance with that Charter's objectives. All members of those bodies are expected to operate to a strict code of conduct, with disciplinary procedures in place for misdemeanours.

### Education, training & CPD

Works with education establishments and training providers to offer existing and potential members appropriate qualifications, training and professional development.

### Policy & public affairs

Engages with government and other relevant stakeholders to inform policy that balances the interests of the industry, their profession and the public.

### Research & knowledge

Publishes research and shares knowledge to a wide range of stakeholders, including policy makers and professionals both inside and outside the industry.

### International membership & affiliations

Cooperates globally with members and organisations to promote their respective industry and profession. Overseas members, as well as partnerships and affiliations, provide crucial insight on the international market, such as differing legislation and standards.

### Other functions

Professional Bodies deliver numerous awards, conferences and events to raise the profile of their sector. Marketing and communications functions also ensure these are delivered high standards.

# PRODUCTIVITY

## Why productivity in construction is important

It is becoming a mantra in many circles: “If the UK wants to prosper, we must raise productivity.”

One of the first key documents to emerge from the newly-elected government addresses the subject head on. It is a major concern.

Productivity is the cornerstone of economic progress. It is, however, not that simple. Productivity depends on the mix of things we do and how we measure it. Nationally, productivity depends on what we do – high-value-added or low-value-added work. We can substitute labour intensive work for capital intensive, manual for intellectual. But we cannot easily substitute construction. Every nation needs it.

So if construction is not to be a drag nationally, raising its productivity is essential. Construction provides the buildings and infrastructure that most of the rest of the economy relies on, so has a strong bearing on economic productivity. For these reasons, understanding and addressing productivity in construction and its impact on the productivity of other industries is highly important.

On a simple measure of output per hour worked, construction underperforms the economy as a whole. In the 20 years from 1994 to 2014 there was a 9% increase in construction, while the increase for the economy as a whole was 25%<sup>1</sup>.

Arguably most of the productivity gains in construction have gone into making better buildings, the value of which will have been derived in higher productivity within the economic activity of the users.

It is highly likely that things are set to change with the advances in both materials and information technology into construction. Notably, building information modelling (BIM) is expected to make profound improvements to productivity in the design, construction and post-occupancy running of buildings.

## Role of professional bodies

Professional bodies play a major role in improving productivity within their respective industries. Most of what they do can lead to productivity improvements. The impact of their role may be direct, through increasing the capability of the workforce and management by promoting best practice and sharing the latest advancements. This increases the human capital within the economy. It may also be indirect through increasing trust, reducing uncertainty and transaction costs. Furthermore, professional bodies help to co-ordinate advances in innovation and promote the uptake of new techniques and technologies. The polling certainly suggests that for those with knowledge of professional bodies, the impact of professional qualifications is seen as positive.

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**Professional bodies play a major role in improving productivity within their respective industries. Most of what they do can lead to productivity improvements.**

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## How do they do it?

### Education, training and qualifications

Improving education is crucial to raising productivity. Professional bodies are at the heart of setting, maintaining and monitoring educational and professional qualifications for professionals. They ensure university degrees and other courses remain relevant to the changing needs of the industry and the economy at large. They are critical in supporting CPD (continuing professional development). The effects of professional qualifications on human capital and productivity can be seen in the lifetime benefit to those who gain them. UK Commission for Employment

and Skills (UKCES) states: “Being a member of a professional body and holding a professional qualification can bring an estimated lifetime benefit of £152,000 to an individual compared to those without professional qualifications.”<sup>ii</sup>

### Spillover effects

Examples of spillover effects from professional bodies’ impact on productivity include the saving of time and resource made by employers when recruiting; having credible qualifications to help gauge the quality of applicants, and simplifying the induction and in-house training of new recruits. The CIOB for instance, with its strong membership of construction managers, helps shape the training and development of the site workforce outside its membership.

### Research

Institutions throughout construction undertake between them large amounts of research which pushes forward the boundaries of knowledge. The direct link to the industry through members focuses the research to meet practical problems, be they in processes, technology or human resources.

### Networks and communications

Professional bodies have built essential networks where experience and information, including research, is exchanged. They provide conduits for gathering and disseminating information. Their authority and

credibility ensures important information is taken seriously. These networks spread regionally, nationally and, very much so in construction, internationally.

### Policy formulation

Institutions play a major role within the policy making aimed directly or indirectly at raising productivity. They provide both expert and practical advice, so policies conceived in meeting rooms work on the ground. And the advice is given within the spirit of the public interest obligation of the professional body. Their members can and do provide significant expert support to government at all levels through voluntary work on task forces, committees, councils, commissions and other forums.

### Conclusion

It is hard to measure precisely and directly how much professional bodies boost productivity. But that professional qualifications add on average more than £150,000 to an individual’s lifetime benefits is a guide to the scale. The above headings strongly suggest the need for input from professional bodies in the quest to improve productivity should not be in dispute. Reflecting back, given the current policy focus on productivity, professional bodies might wish to ensure raising productivity is presently high on their own policy agenda.



## IN FOCUS: The productivity challenge



### The factors that influence construction productivity are many and varied.

A paper written in 2008, entitled ‘*Trends of skills and productivity in the UK construction*’<sup>iii</sup>, noted: quality; number and balance of labour force; motivation of labour force; degree of mechanisation; continuity of work; complexity of work; required quality of finished work; method of construction; type of contract; quality and number of managers; weather; changes made by the client; political stability, management practice, technology and labour skills and training. This list could easily be expanded; for example, the economic cycle is clearly a major factor.

Measuring productivity in construction is, like most metrics for the industry, far from straightforward to calculate with any real meaning. The effects of increases in quality and dealing with increased regulation have significant bearing on productivity.

Ian McCafferty, an External Member of the Monetary Policy Committee for the Bank of England in a speech in June 2014<sup>iv</sup> on the UK productivity puzzle, noted two major factors influencing construction productivity. They were higher staffing levels to meet stricter regulation and the retention of labour and skills through the recession to avoid higher subsequent recruitment costs.

Measured on a simple basis of output per hour worked, what is clear is that productivity in construction rises far slower than for many other industries and the economy as a whole, as we see in figure 2.

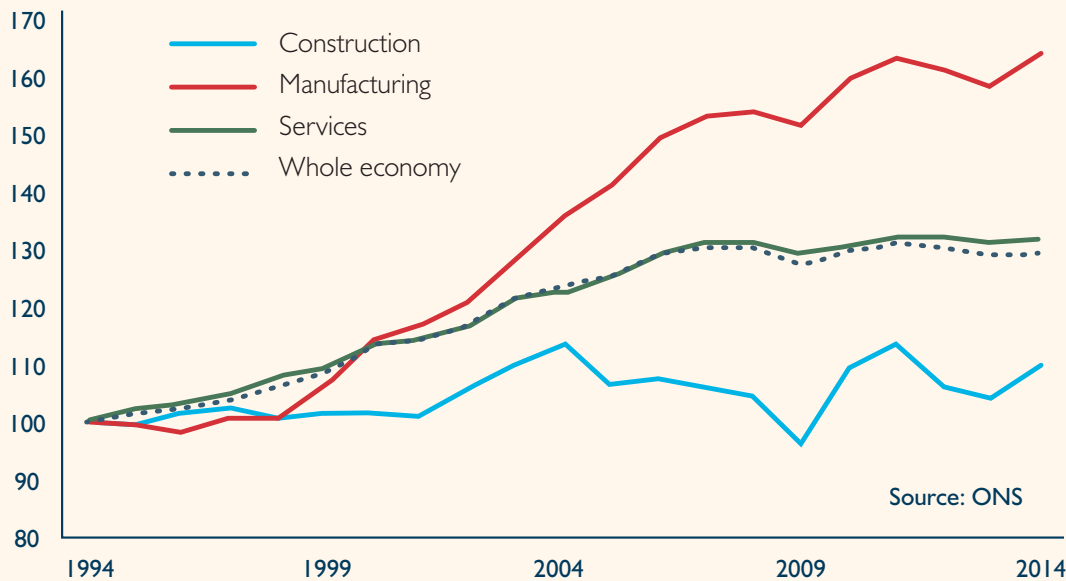


**IN FOCUS:** The productivity challenge (continued)



Figure 2

**Growth in output per hour over 20 years for various UK economic sectors (1994=100)**



However, this is not a UK phenomenon. Data compiled by the international economics organisation OECD shows how over the same period data when UK construction productivity rose 9%, in Germany it rose just 3%, while it fell in France by 19% and in Italy by 13%.

What the comparisons in the chart and the information that multiple factors influence construction productivity do provide, however, is much food for thought. They tempt us with a belief that there is much scope to improve productivity.

In this regard, professional bodies working with each other and their members are excellently placed to research and test new ways of working that may lead to the national aspiration of higher productivity.

 **Observations from the research**

The polling of the public found that a vast majority of those who know something about professional bodies agree that professional qualifications help raise standards (83%), compared with 57% of those who have never heard of professional bodies.

On balance, the MPs polled believe professional bodies are effective in improving industry performance and productivity, with 35% scored 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all effective and 5 very effective) while just 8% scored 1 or 2. For effectiveness at raising standards of competency and knowledge, 49% of the MPs scored 4 or 5. Importantly the data does show that those MPs and members of the public more familiar with professional bodies give far higher scores than those who are not.

# SOCIAL MOBILITY

## Why social mobility is important

The world may be becoming more equal, but societies are becoming a less equal. The former is to be applauded; the second is of increasing concern. Inequality within societies is increasingly cited across the political spectrum as morally unacceptable, a threat to social cohesion and an economic millstone.

The reasons are complex. But social mobility is one obvious issue that needs to be addressed if we are to correct growing inequality.

The government's Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission in August 2014 produced the report *'Elitist Britain?'*<sup>v</sup> It found access to the top jobs was highly skewed to those from better-off backgrounds and more affluent regions. A number of complex reasons were cited: wealth distribution; parenting of children; school and education; movement from school to university to work, and the recruitment and promotion within work.

Importantly, when we examine how government seeks to measure social mobility, two among the list of 19 measures stand out: access to professions and second chances.

Why is access to professions an important indicator?: "There is evidence that a large number of the professions remain dominated by a small section of society and that in recent decades many professions have become less socially representative."

And second chances: "Qualifications play an important role in allowing people to progress in the labour market – those with few qualifications have lower employment rates and less earning potential. Access to opportunities to gain qualifications and update skills throughout adulthood is important in giving people a 'second chance' to succeed."

It is evident that professional bodies have a major role to play in social mobility. Within construction, routes into management or the professions are far from restricted to university graduates. Research conducted in 2013 by the industry training body CITB shows that, of those who entered construction directly at 16 years old, 28% were managers and 16% professionals, at the time of the survey<sup>vi</sup>. This pattern is changing,

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It is evident that professional bodies have a major role to play in social mobility.

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but construction still offers flexibility in the route to management and the professions.

## Role of professional bodies

The role that professional bodies play within social mobility is complex. Their role to set standards, by its very nature, inhibits access to the unqualified. But their role to promote education, career choices and to widen membership routes both opens up and propels the careers of all. Balancing these two roles can lead to tension, but it is important to observe that many other aspects associated with social mobility are not necessarily able to be influenced by professional bodies, instead manifesting themselves within society at large. However, the role professional bodies can and do play in promoting social mobility is huge; the CIOB, for example, prides itself on the numbers of its members that start their careers in the trades. Through its strong contingent of construction managers, the CIOB has close contact with the site workforce and devises routes into membership and qualifications that are relevant to those with a background in trades careers who wish to progress to a professional career.

## How do they do it?

### Education, qualifications and training

Professional bodies can provide routes to entry for all, providing there is the necessary external support. In providing trusted qualifications that remain open to individuals at any point within their career, employers are better placed to select candidates on merit, rather than on achievements in early-years. Through constant educational support, such as CPD, members progress and develop a greater understanding and wider view of the industry. Construction's professional bodies can also contribute support to training initiatives across the industry and open routes from the trades to the professions.

### Standards and culture

Professional bodies maintain and improve standards, not just practical standards, but those of ethics and behaviour. Professional bodies can act to encourage fairer access, whether social, gender or race, and discourage discrimination. They can also create a culture that promotes aspiration for all. The CIOB, alongside other bodies, helped lay the foundations for the Considerate Constructors Scheme, which has immeasurably improved the image of construction while also providing respect and support to local communities.

### Networks

Professional bodies provide essential networks where experience and information is exchanged. This can, and should, provide an equal footing for all – regardless of background - to make the necessary contacts and to access the right opportunities and information needed to progress within the career.

### Action in the wider world

Institutions can play a major role within the policy making process concerning social mobility. They can provide expert advice to government or other policy makers to ensure any decisions and strategies conceived

in meeting rooms work on the ground. Furthermore, given their public interest mandate, they are well positioned and well inclined to channel voluntary effort from their members to assist on committees or groups seeking to address the issues of social mobility.

### Research

Professional bodies can respond to policy issues such as social mobility through research and an examination of their industry from an informed perspective. Hidden prejudices can be more easily exposed by those with an intimate knowledge of the working of an industry. This can be facilitated by information derived directly from its membership.

### Conclusion

The potential for professional bodies to help improve social mobility is vast. However, one primary function is simultaneously to invite and encourage the capable and, as with all institutions, to challenge or exclude those less capable. With the causes of social immobility being so complex, professional bodies need to work within the network of stakeholders to improve conditions. Their role, however, should not be overlooked, dismissed or misinterpreted. Instead, it is critical.



## IN FOCUS: Where a career in construction can take you- Paul Nash MSc, FCIQB

**When I was growing up, I had never considered a career in the construction industry. I had initially set my heart on joining the Royal Navy but the onset of short-sightedness meant there was no option but to find another career choice. I was encouraged to consider Quantity Surveying and, having left school in 1982, I joined Fairclough Building as an indentured management trainee, learning on the job whilst studying part-time at Willesden Technical College.**

During a four year programme of training, I gained experience of a number of roles and was awarded Surveying Trainee of the Year two years running. In 1989 I was admitted as a Member of the Chartered Institute of Building. At my CIOB professional interview, I was advised to undertake a Master's Degree in Project Management, which was something that I had never considered. With the support of my employer, I completed a part-time Master's at the University of Reading, graduating in 1992 and receiving the prize for the best dissertation.

By 1998 I had decided to pursue a career as a Consultant Project Manager and joined Bucknall Austin, rising to the position of Director of their Project and Construction Management business. I later joined major construction consultants EC Harris and Cyril Sweett, and at the latter I became a Main Board Director with operational responsibility for their Project Management business.

In 2008 I became a CIOB Trustee, opening my eyes to the day-to-day operations of a professional body, and in 2014 I was honoured to be invited to become the 113th President of the CIOB, a position I will take up in 2016.





**IN FOCUS:** Where a career in construction can take you (continued)



In my current role as Director of Turner & Townsend Project Management Ltd, I am responsible for developing and promoting the company's programme management service in the UK, supporting clients such as Barclays and Shell.

According to UK Commission for Employment and Skills, the profile of the construction workforce will become increasingly white collar, reflecting the increased importance of professionals and the changes in working practices within the industry. But alongside this, a staggering statistic is that more than half of all new skilled trades jobs created in the UK from now until 2022, over 450,000 in total, are projected to be in construction. That alone should place construction central in the minds of careers advisers as a vocation open to anyone. I could never have imagined when I started out where a career in construction would take me.



## Observations from the research

The polling of the public found that recognition of professional bodies is far greater within the AB social grade<sup>3</sup> (57% have heard of and know something about them) than the DE<sup>4</sup> social grade (23%). On the face of it, this may suggest professional bodies are simply elitist. In reality, professional status in part defines social grade. So these statistics represent a challenge and an opportunity for professional bodies to raise understanding and aspiration among lower social grades and improve social mobility.

The challenge in being more effective in improving social mobility and being seen to be so is underscored by the polling of MPs. This found that just 11% of MPs thought professional bodies were effective (scoring 4 or 5 on a 1 to 5 scale, where 5 is very effective) at enhancing social mobility. Encouragingly, those who are more familiar with professional bodies think they are more effective. 10 of the 11 MPs who were familiar scored them 3, 4 or 5.



<sup>3</sup> Social Grade 'AB' – Higher & intermediate managerial, administrative, professional occupations.

<sup>4</sup> Social Grade 'DE' – Semi-skilled & unskilled manual occupations, unemployed and lowest grade occupations.

# GOVERNANCE AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

## Why good governance is important

One thing we learnt from the financial crisis it is that professionals unfettered by well-policed sound ethical codes can wreak havoc with the economy. The pain, suffering and insecurity caused will reverberate for a generation, if not longer.

As the world becomes more complex, professional discipline, organisational transparency and strong guidelines for behaviour becomes increasingly important. And institutions are critical.

The World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015<sup>vii</sup> laid out its 12 pillars of competitiveness. The first pillar was institutions. It stated: “The quality of institutions has a strong bearing on competitiveness and growth. It influences investment decisions and the organization of production and plays a key role in the ways in which societies distribute the benefits and bear the costs of development strategies and policies.”

State legislation can only go so far. Practically there are limits and, furthermore, a heavy burden of legislation can bear down of economic efficiency. There’s a balance to be struck. The desire for light-touch regulation must be weighed against the risk of corruption, criminality, failure and ultimately damage to both the economy and individuals.

The foundation on which we build a successful and sustainable society and economy is trust. The more we can trust people to get on with things in a desirable way the less the need to control through rules and regulations.

There will always be a need for rules, sanctions, prohibitions, discipline and punishments. But ideally these stand as lighthouses guiding people and organisations away from the rocky shores of bad practice.

Construction has always been a beacon for misbehaviour. Across the globe its association with corruption and bribery remains too familiar. Large sums of money can be hidden and misappropriated more easily within construction than within many other industries.

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**Without professional bodies, the role of the state would inevitably have to be more far-reaching and intrusive.**

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Poor ethical standards are not just linked to financial matters. Construction is still seen as a dangerous industry and this tag is too freely used to deflect efforts to raise standards of health and safety among workers. It cloaks reckless behaviour.

As efforts in the UK have revealed, these issues are not just one of discipline. They require cultural changes, changes in professional behaviour supported by sound education and the setting and policing of acceptable standards.

Without professional bodies, the role of the state would inevitably have to be more far-reaching and intrusive.

## Role of professional bodies

Professional bodies are critical in setting and policing standards of behaviour. Central to their mission is the creation of a group of professionals that can be trusted to deliver well and to deliver true to high standards that are acceptable socially, economically and ethically. Their connections and value within an industry can help to understand the issues, lean against wrongdoing, provide support for those who are unwillingly being drawn into unacceptable behaviour and discipline those who transgress.

## How they do it

### Setting and policing standards

Professional bodies maintain and improve standards associated with ethics and behaviour. They also put in place mechanisms to judge behaviour and to discipline those who transgress. Furthermore they are well placed to liaise with government and other legislative bodies when and where regulation and controls are



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## Professional bodies maintain and improve standards associated with ethics and behaviour.

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needed. Here professional bodies have a public interest and an incentive to the sustainability and reputation of the profession, rather than commercial interests.

### Whistleblowing

Corruption and wrongdoing rely frequently on fear. Many otherwise upstanding individuals can be drawn into supporting or ignoring bad acts for fear that they might be punished for revealing them. Professional bodies provide a channel and support for whistleblowers.

### Education and culture

Professional bodies are highly influential in how young professionals are educated, their understanding of legal and ethical standards and the culture that shapes their approach to work. The standards and rules necessarily change and develop. Here the reach of professional bodies through providing information and CPD works to keep practice in the field up to date.

### Networks and communications

Professional bodies provide essential networks and vital communication. Setting strong ethical standards that do not tolerate wrongdoing has three effects within these networks. Firstly it spreads an acceptable culture and norms. Secondly it provides feedback on how standards can be improved. Thirdly it provides a channel of intelligence that can scan for wrongdoing. These networks in many cases spread beyond geographical borders and narrow industry sectors and can be used to deliver practical solutions to common problems that span sectors and nations. This reach can help to help to raise standards internationally, which in turn supports trade.

### Internal governance

Who polices the police? It is essential that professional bodies themselves are scrutinised so that they meet the highest standards. The workings of professional bodies are open to scrutiny. But it is critical they continuously seek to sustain and improve governance and maintain high levels of transparency.

### Conclusion

Corruption and wrongdoing may always exist. It is by its very nature hard to eradicate. But it must be leaned against continuously through providing a strong culture, greater transparency and meaningful, policed discipline and punishment. Here professional bodies can be extremely effective, working with the grain of the sector or industry they cover, imbuing their members with an ethical culture and sense of greater purpose, keeping them abreast of what is and what is not acceptable and providing a safe haven for those who speak up against wrongdoing.





## IN FOCUS: Taking an ethical approach



**Ethics and ethical behaviour is a central pillar of professionalism. It does not matter how skilled and experienced a person is or becomes: if they behave dishonestly and without regard for the rights of others, they are not a professional.**

The message applies both domestically and internationally, irrespective of cultural and behavioural differences.

Professional bodies have a duty to spread the ethical message. In the wake of numerous reports of human rights abuses in Qatar in preparation for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, the CIOB moved to influence the debate on the ground. With an estimated half a million foreign-born workers operating within Qatar's construction sector, human rights violations have been, rightfully, well documented.

Working with key strategic partners including Amnesty International, Engineers Against Poverty and the Qatar Foundation (QF) it helped raise the issue of worker welfare under the kefala system. This included hosting a conference in Doha focused on improving working and living conditions throughout the region and signing and supporting a number of agreements including the QFs Mandatory Standards of Migrant Workers' Welfare regulations, which is now subject to national law.

The CIOB has been clear that the responsibility for improving workers welfare in the Gulf region is not solely that of governments, but of construction companies themselves and the individuals who work within them. Change can only happen if firms – who in Qatar are more often than not European-based – effectively manage their supply chains and the workers within it.

Professional bodies should not be shying away from these issues and should be seen as part of their duty to act in the public interest.



## Observations from the research

The polling of the public found that a vast majority of those who know something about professional bodies agree that they would trust a professional more if they knew that they were a member of a professional body (76%), compared with 46% of those who have never heard of professional bodies.

The MPs polled on balance believe professional bodies are effective in promoting robust standards of compliance, governance and ethics in their industry, with 43% saying effective (scoring 4 to 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not at all effective and 5 very effective) and just 8% saying not effective (scoring 1 or 2). Importantly, those more familiar with chartered professional bodies are much more likely to see them as effective in promoting good governance and ethics.

# INTERNATIONAL

## Why international networks are important

Across the political and economic spectrum there is agreement that the UK needs to boost exports if it wishes to rebalance its economy and put it on a more stable long-term path.

This aspiration is recognised in part within the former coalition government's Construction 2025 strategy published in 2013<sup>viii</sup>. One of its four key targets was to cut by 50% the trade gap in building materials and products through improving exports.

The strategy recognised, perhaps too mutedly, the strong trade balance generated by professional services in the built environment. Comparing the five year periods 2004 to 2008 with 2009 to 2013, the positive trade balance for services related to the built environment has grown hugely. Construction services rose from £125 million per annum to £367 million, architectural services up from £202 million to £367 million, and engineering services (which include a large slice of work within the built environment) rose from £3,675 million to £5,246 million<sup>ix</sup>.

Importantly, jobs in services in the built environment are more likely to be higher earning than jobs in materials or product production and so be more sustainable in the UK's high wage economy.

Professional services in the built environment are a UK success story in the international market. Encouragingly, this is a market that is expanding at a rapid rate.

The role of professional bodies can be highly significant in determining the success in the global market of individuals and businesses in their home market.

## Role of professional bodies

The role of UK professional bodies in global markets broadly is three fold. Firstly, they engage

in determining international standards, codes and practices, as a national body or within an international federated professional body. Secondly, they may have an international membership, which provides intimate ties between the nations where their overseas members reside and the nation where the professional body has its headquarters. Thirdly, they may act as a rallying point for trade missions or other activities, helping their members and the industry in general to understand and to engage in overseas activity.

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## Professional services in the built environment are a UK success story in the international market.

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## How do they do it?

### Being UK based

UK professional bodies are at an advantage. The global respect for the laws and institutions of the UK (broadly, the notion of the rule of law), makes them attractive, particularly among nations with less developed institutional frameworks. This allows UK institutions to spread their membership widely across the globe. This increases the UK's "soft power"<sup>5</sup> which in turn supports UK firms operating within international markets.

### International industry standards

Professional bodies are active in setting and maintaining standards both in their home nation and, increasingly, internationally. Having strong and effective UK-based professional bodies increases the scope to influence and support international standards and ensure that they are not unnecessarily burdensome to UK working practices.

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<sup>5</sup> Soft power, coined in 1990 by Joseph Nye, is the ability of a nation to influence another through persuasion or attraction, rather than coercion. It is often associated with a nation's culture, political values and approach to foreign policy, rather than economic or military muscle. The UK ranks very highly on soft power. The Portland Soft Power 30 index ranks the UK first above Germany and the US. The index was created by communications consultant Portland, in association with Facebook and ComRes. Further information is available from <http://softpower30.portland-communications.com/ranking>

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## As markets are becoming increasingly global, UK professional bodies operating in the built environment have a huge role to play.

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### Education and qualifications

Professional bodies are at the heart of professional qualifications in their field. Having membership across international markets means that the qualifications, practices and culture become more aligned overseas to the UK position than they might otherwise. This can ease access to opportunities for UK professionals or firms seeking to work abroad if the qualifications are recognised.

### Networks, communication and advice

Professional bodies, particularly in construction, have strong international links, helped by increasing international membership. This supports the spread of best practice across the world. From a UK perspective it also means the professional bodies are better able to provide advice and contacts to members with an interest in overseas markets. They are better able to support and advise on trade missions and other such events. They are better placed to undertake research into overseas markets and provide relevant information to members. CIOB for instance publishes regular news, analysis and features on international construction through its online Global Construction Review.

### Policy input

Professional bodies can provide advice and support government action to boost international trade. They can, among other things, tap into their international contacts, support trade missions, deliver delegates and provide background research and knowledge to plan more effective actions. They can also provide informed and expert guidance on often complex international issues, Qatar construction being a case in point.

### Conclusion

Growth in the global construction market is becoming increasingly focused on emerging nations. In the main, these nations have less settled institutional frameworks and a less developed core of professionals. This means professionals and professional bodies in developed nations have huge opportunities to supply services and knowledge. As markets are becoming increasingly global, UK professional bodies operating in the built environment have a huge role to play. They increase the UK's soft power internationally. They increase openings for UK firms. Through their influence on ways of doing things in their field they ensure UK firms are well placed to operate in overseas markets.



### IN FOCUS: Raising standards in one of the fastest-growing construction markets

#### **Velan Murali MCIQB MRICS, Country Head of construction consultancy Arcadis in India, provides his perspective on the international importance of professional bodies.**

Based in the bustling metropolis of Bangalore, the leading hub of the IT industry in India, Velan has witnessed huge levels of investment and scores of new construction projects as a result of the city's successful high-tech exports. The challenge, Velan explains, is to deliver the buildings and infrastructure that these companies demand to as professional a standard as possible.

"India has huge talent, but needs the tools to drive it forward. Professional institutes have a major role to play by offering strategic advice to the industry on economics, law, technology, finance, management and the latest practices.

"By being a member of both the CIOB and the RICS, I am aligning myself with the very best property and construction professionals around the globe. It makes me glad to be able to contribute to the ongoing raising of standards in the profession, with the ultimate aim of achieving greater transparency and competitiveness throughout the construction industry in India.



**IN FOCUS:** Raising standards in one of the fastest-growing construction markets (continued)

“The CIOB, which is becoming better recognised globally, is hugely relevant to India as most of the professional industry consists of engineers and construction managers. MCIQB and FCIOB designations are recognised and respected as the mark of true construction professionalism. I personally chose to be a member of the CIOB as many of my clients have their global headquarters in the UK; having membership of a respected international professional body therefore provides real value to my clients while doing business in India. In addition, many professional sectors in India, including construction, closely follow British standards and practices which allow us to develop our professional skills to similar high standards.”



## Observations from the research

The polling of the public found that a vast majority of those who know something about professional bodies agree that professional qualifications are useful if you want to work abroad (60%). Just 9% disagreed.

However, polling of MPs suggests that they rank fairly lowly the value of professional bodies in overseas markets. A quarter of MPs polled thought professional bodies were effective in increasing UK trade opportunities abroad, with 24% scoring 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all effective and 5 very effective) and 18% scoring 1 or 2. There was some encouragement – all 11 of those who said they were familiar with professional bodies scored 3 or above, in part suggesting MPs’ views would be more positive if they were aware of the work of professional bodies. However, MPs saw improving international membership and influence ranked fairly low priority for professional bodies. The MPs were likely to see professional bodies as effective at influencing international standards, with 31% scoring 4 or 5 and a further 50% scoring 3 on this question.



# POLICY FORMATION

## The challenges of policy formation

Forming good policy is tough. Ideal policy manages to sensitively balance competing interests in the pursuit of the greatest good and it is seen and respected for doing so.

For policy makers it is not always clear what the upsides and downsides of policy will actually amount to. Try as they may, when people make decisions they inevitably have limited knowledge.

The task for policy makers is further confused by lobbying. This has expanded hugely over recent years. Its purpose is to sway decisions in favour of its clients. These may be private individuals, businesses, trade associations, campaign groups, trades unions, charities or, indeed, professional bodies. The input can prove invaluable, but more often than not it will come with an agenda attached.

The challenge for policy makers is gauging the agenda of lobbyists to discern how partial or representative the advice is and how useful it might be in terms of understanding both the issue at hand and the best policy choices.

Policy making might at times require establishing a commission or working group, constituted to gain deeper insight into a particular issue or to select suitable policy options. This raises issues of who should sit on the commission or working group and the agenda of each selected member.

It is here that professional bodies can play a useful role as their membership contains an array of experts in their field and they as organisations have a body of evidence on their subject. More importantly, professional bodies have a public interest obligation and do not represent the narrow commercial interests of an individual or a business. Their agenda can more reliably be taken to be squarely in support of the best interests of their industry or sector, but constrained by the public interest and, increasingly, a requirement to be transparent.

## Role of professional bodies

Professional bodies have the potential to play a major role in policy making within their sectors, regionally, nationally and internationally. This is most apparent in regulation and qualification associated with their professions. But the range of activity spans wider, covering strategy, ethical behaviour, standards, innovation and much more. They engage in and contribute to wider policy debates. This is particularly true of professions engaged in the built environment, which impacts profoundly on the lives of everyone. Here professional bodies can advise on the likely impact of policy both on the industry and on the public at large. The public interest obligation is critical here. Professional bodies have a role also in communicating and explaining the implications of pertinent policy decisions to their members.

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For policy makers it is not always clear what the upsides and downsides of policy will actually amount to.

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## How do they do it?

### Policy and public affairs

Professional bodies constantly monitor policy relevant to their profession, seeking to anticipate unintended outcomes not appreciated during the policy formation and constantly ready to offer advice or make representations to help avoid poor decisions. They can provide advice and information to policy makers to enhance their understanding and ensure decisions and strategies conceived in meeting rooms work on the ground, or even formulate solutions to issues and present their findings to policy makers. Their public interest obligation means that their advice carries greater trust and is not shaped by commercial interest.

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## Policy making in the UK would be significantly less effective without the input of expertise from professional bodies.

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### **Networks, communications and advice**

Professional bodies provide essential networks where experience and information is exchanged. These networks can be used to rapidly provide feedback on impending policy, thus capturing views from a vast pool of expertise, and detail to members on the implications of policies that have been implemented. Their reach and connections across markets help to collect and collate information and best practice from around globe which can be used to broaden the evidence base on which policy is formed. This provides a huge resource on which policy makers can draw on when considering the potential impact of policy.

### **Research**

Institutions throughout the construction sector also undertake between them large amounts of research which pushes forward the boundaries of knowledge. This research will frequently offer up policy challenges. The policy and public affairs role of professional bodies can bring these issues to the attention of relevant policy makers. This is an area that CIOB has been expanding with research on both industry specific issues, such as the construction skills shortage, and national/international interest issues such as migration.

### **Education and continuing professional development**

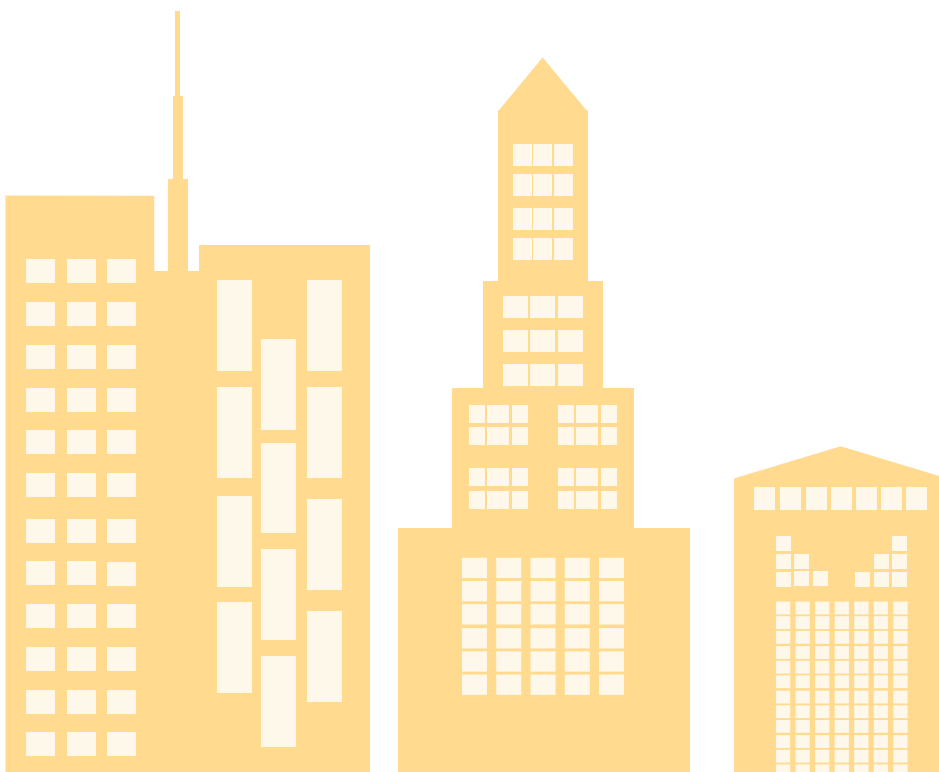
Professional bodies provide a rapid conduit for learning about and absorbing the implications on working practices of policy changes.

### **Voluntary work**

Professional bodies rely on the voluntary work of their members. This vast amount of work is captured for the public good and the good of the industry itself. The membership of professional bodies also provide expert input to or within committees, councils, commissions and other forums outside their direct professional interest.

### **Conclusion**

Policy making in the UK would be significantly less effective without the input of expertise from professional bodies. While their agenda will be to further the interests of their profession, this is checked by their public interest obligation. This means that the information and advice they provide can be better trusted than many lobbyists. Furthermore, within the built environment sector, for example, professional bodies work hard to produce policies that are workable, increase efficiency and produce better buildings and structures for their clients and the ultimate user.







## IN FOCUS: Taking a more proactive approach



**Professional bodies have always engaged in and been an important part of policy formation. But in construction this has tended to be most evident within the realm of forming and setting technical industry regulations.**

This important function has led to improvements in the delivery of buildings which are safe, healthy, sustainable and accessible for everyone. However, policy issues facing construction go far beyond the technical arena. And one, if not the biggest, policy success in construction over the past few decades has been improving health, safety and welfare on site.

In terms of construction safety, the UK has maintained a greater record than most developed nations. Yet in the 1980s, deaths of more than 100 per year were frequently reported as a result of on-site activity. The introduction of the Construction (Design and Management) regulations in 1994 saw construction-related deaths fall by almost half. The introduction of the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 also saw firms anticipating the change and a sharp drop in site-related deaths resulted. The figures for 2014/15 reveal that 35 construction workers and 4 members of the public were killed as a result of on-site activity; a number which remains too high, but one which signals great progress. Reported injuries have also fallen very sharply and can be considered a similar case in point.

Working with government and collaboration across the sector was imperative in driving a step change in health and safety. Importantly, professional bodies have a vital role in ensuring their members continue to demonstrate a commitment to health and safety as a condition of membership.

But it is fair to say that construction's professional bodies have in the past been comfortable taking a responsive rather than proactive approach to non-technical policy issues.

The strategic challenges over recent decades, such as the Latham and Egan industry reviews and more recently the introduction of BIM, have pulled professionals far more into the broader policy forum. This appears to have generated a cultural change and a greater desire to engage more widely.

There are certainly signs of change. The CIOB, for instance, is becoming far more active in areas of broader policy. It has reshaped its Policy Board to understand how it can be bolder and proactive in the policy arena. Research is also moving into larger policy agendas; delving into important agendas such as youth unemployment, migration and modern slavery.

For policy makers this represents a positive move as the understanding of policy within professional bodies and their ability to contribute practical workable solutions looks set to increase.



## Observations from the research

The polling of the public found that 62% agree that professional bodies can help guide government on relevant policies. However, among those who know something about professional bodies 77% agree and just 13% disagree.

And polling of MPs found that 48% score professional bodies at 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5 for effectiveness in supporting good policy making in their industry (1 being not at all effective and 5 very effective) while just 8% scored 1 or 2. The polling indicates that the more familiar MPs are with professional bodies the more useful they see them to be. More than half (55%) agree that professional bodies provide an objective industry voice that can be trusted by policy makers against 14% disagreeing.



# DATA AND ANALYSIS

## FINDINGS OF SURVEY OF MPS AND VIEW ON PROFESSIONAL BODIES

### MPs Panel Survey

CIOB commissioned a survey of MPs to gain insight into their understanding and views of professional bodies, especially within construction. ComRes interviewed 152 MPs online and by self-completion paper questionnaire between 9 June and 1 August 2015. Data were weighted by party and region to be representative of the House of Commons.

With a sample size of 152 MPs, the margin of error for results at a 95% confidence level is 6.96%. Differences of less than this should be treated as indicative rather than definitive.

### Familiarity

Most MPs claim to have a moderate familiarity (with 65% scoring themselves between 3 and 7 on a 0-10 scale) with the purpose of chartered professional bodies (65%), the working of chartered professional bodies (68%), or the professional bodies for finance (69%),

healthcare (73%) or construction professions (67%). But as can be seen, relatively few would score themselves as having a strong familiarity.

Conservative MPs are more likely than their Labour counterparts to be familiar with the workings of chartered professional bodies (20% compared to 7%), but Conservative MPs are more likely to say they are unfamiliar with the chartered professional bodies for construction professions than Labour MPs (30% compared to 19%).

MPs are most familiar with the purpose of chartered professional bodies (22%). MPs are least familiar with the chartered professional bodies for construction professionals of the three sectors tested (24% unfamiliar, 8% familiar).

MPs representing London (31% say they are familiar) and the Midlands (28%) have higher levels of awareness of the purpose of chartered professional bodies than those from the South or North (11% and 10% respectively).

Figure 3

### Familiarity with chartered professional bodies



**Q:** Chartered professional bodies are professional institutions with formal credentials of competence in a specific field of work. They promote and support a particular profession. Thinking about chartered professional bodies in general, how familiar or unfamiliar would you say you are with each of the following? [Base: (All MPs n=152)]

## Effectiveness

MPs are most likely to think chartered professional bodies for construction professions are effective in raising standards of competence and knowledge and supporting good policy making (49%), of activities tested. For each activity tested, Conservative MPs are more likely than Labour to say that chartered professional bodies for construction professionals are effective. In addition, MPs are more likely to say that chartered professional bodies for construction professions are ineffective than effective at enhancing social mobility.

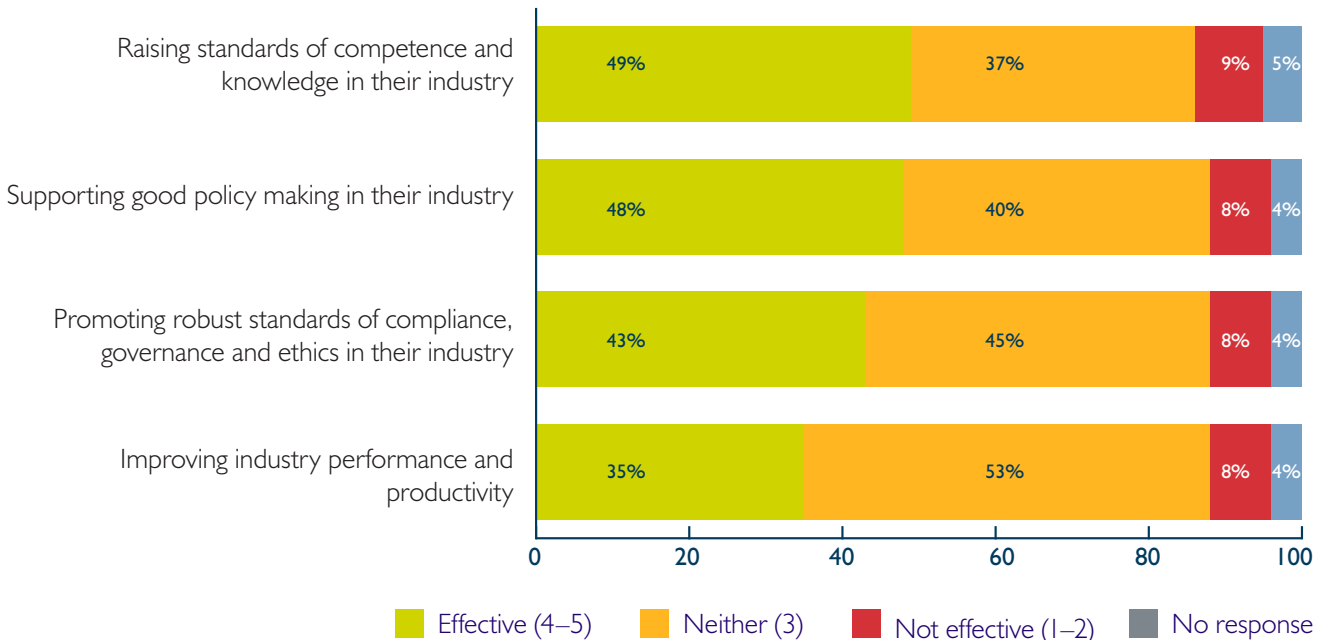
MPs tend to be more positive about the ability of chartered professional bodies for construction professionals to support good policy making (48%) and in promoting robust standards of compliance, governance and ethics in their industry (43% view as effective, selecting 4 or 5 out of 5, where 5 = very effective and 1 = not at all effective).

MPs are less certain in their attitudes when it comes to the benefits chartered professional bodies bring to the UK as a whole, with at least half giving a neutral rating (3 out of 5) for each of the statements tested. MPs clearly think that chartered professional bodies for construction professions could do more to enhance social mobility, with only 11% believing them to be effective on this measure. This is the only activity tested in which MPs are more likely to view chartered professional bodies for construction professions as not effective, than effective.

MPs who say they are familiar with the chartered bodies for the construction profession (8%) are more likely to view chartered professional bodies for construction professions as effective in the activities tested than those who are unfamiliar. This could indicate that if more MPs were to become aware of, and engaged with, chartered bodies for construction professions, overall impressions of their effectiveness would become more favourable.

Figure 4

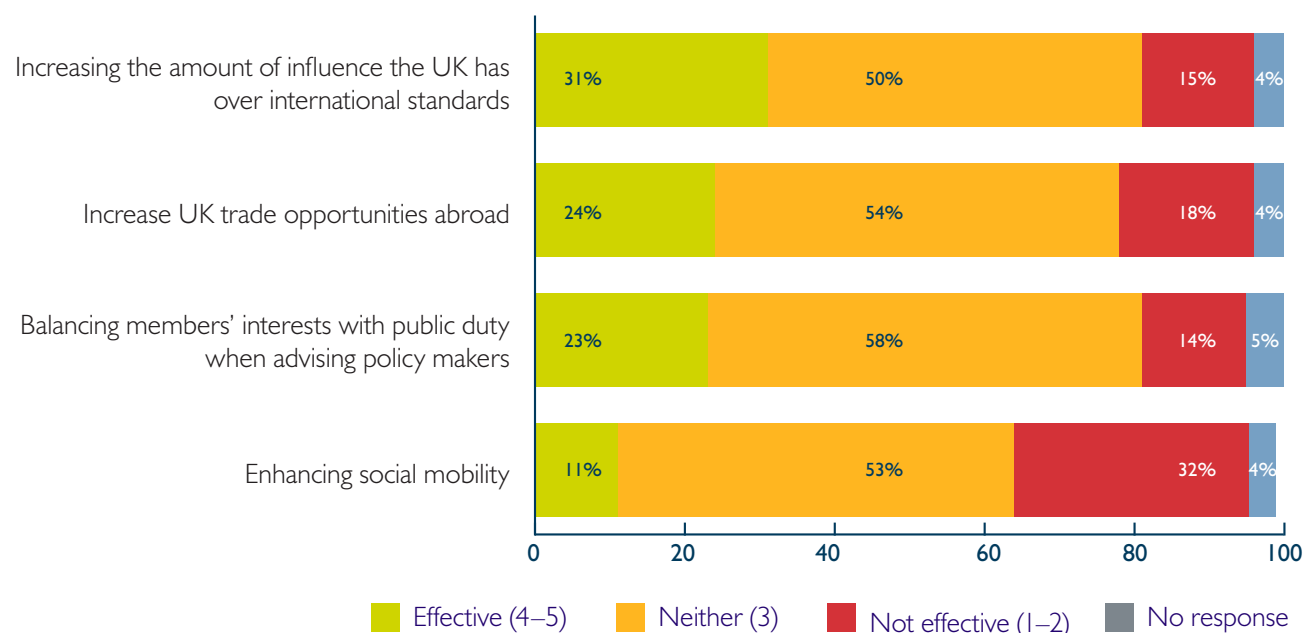
## Improving the industry



**Q:** How effective or ineffective do you think that chartered professional bodies for construction professions are at each of the following: [Base: (All MPs n=152)]

Figure 5

## Benefitting the UK



**Q:** How effective or ineffective do you think that chartered professional bodies for construction professions are at each of the following [Base: (All MPs n=152)]

### Policy and priorities

A majority of MPs believe that chartered professional bodies for construction professions provide an objective industry voice that can be trusted (55%), and 45% believe that they also meet their public interest obligations, compared to just 9% who disagree. However, they feel that they can be biased when advising lawmakers on industry matters – 21% agree that they are unbiased, while 36% disagree. Labour MPs are more likely than their Conservative colleagues to disagree that these bodies are unbiased when advising on industry matters (46% compared to 29%) or that they fairly balance their members' interests with their public duty (22% of Labour MPs disagree with this statement, compared to 14% of Conservative MPs).

For MPs, focussing on ways to improve the productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of the industry and placing greater emphasis on improving technical and ethical standards should be the highest priorities for chartered professional bodies for construction professionals (76% and 74% respectively rank these priorities in their top three). Conservative MPs place the greatest importance on focussing on ways to improve the productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of the industry (86% rank in their top three). By contrast, Labour MPs are more likely than Conservatives to choose improving routes into membership and educational support for non-graduates as a priority (67% compared to 59%).

### Conclusions

MPs have low levels of familiarity with all aspects and types of chartered professional bodies tested, although familiarity is lowest with the specific bodies for the construction profession.

Conservative MPs are more likely to say they are unfamiliar with the chartered professional bodies for construction professions than Labour MPs.

MPs tend to view the chartered professional bodies for construction professions as most effective when it comes to improving the construction industry, raising standards and supporting good policy making. However, attitudes are less certain when it comes to how these bodies benefit the UK as a whole, particularly when it comes to enhancing social mobility.

According to MPs, the key priorities for chartered professional bodies for the construction industry should be focussing on improving the industry, both in terms of productivity and standards, as well as improving support for non-graduates.

Labour MPs are less likely than their Conservative counterparts to view these bodies as effective, and also have less trust than Conservative MPs that chartered professional bodies for the construction industry are unbiased or fairly balance their members' interest with public duty.

# FINDINGS OF SURVEY OF PUBLIC AWARENESS AND VIEW ON PROFESSIONAL BODIES

## Summary

CIOB commissioned a survey to gain insight into the knowledge among the general public about professional bodies. ComRes interviewed 2,012 British adults online between 15 and 16 July 2015. Data were weighted to be representative of all British adults aged 18+.

Four in five Britons (80%) have heard of professional bodies, though only 41% say they know something about them.

British adults who have heard about professional bodies show good awareness of such bodies in the construction sector, with three quarters (74%) having heard of them. However, among those who are aware of professional bodies, awareness is higher in the education, law, healthcare and finance sectors.

Awareness is key to raising positive perceptions of professional bodies; though a majority of the public report positive views, those who know something about professional bodies are much more likely than those who have never heard of them to agree with positive statements about professional bodies and the value of their qualifications. Older age groups are also more likely to report better perceptions of professional bodies.

## Awareness of professional bodies

Four in five British adults (80%) have heard of professional bodies, including 41% who have heard of and know something about them, and 40% who have heard of but know nothing about them. Older respondents are more likely than younger age groups to report knowing about the existence of professional bodies: 83% of those aged 65+ say they have heard of them, compared to 70% of those aged 18-24.

Among those who have heard of professional bodies, the sectors for which people are most likely to have

heard of are healthcare (93%), education (91%), law (89%) and finance/accountancy (87%). The construction sector follows these four (74%) and is well ahead of other sectors, such as IT (57%) or sales, marketing and media (65%). However, only one in four (23%) reportedly know something about professional bodies in the construction sector. Older respondents are more likely than younger age groups to report having heard of professional bodies in the construction sector: 83% of those aged 65+ say they have heard of them, compared to 58% of those aged 18-24.

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**British adults who have heard about professional bodies show good awareness of such bodies in the construction sector, with three quarters (74%) having heard of them.**

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The British public associates professional bodies with positive connotations: two thirds (65%) agree that membership of a professional body would increase their trust in a professional, 61% see a role for professional bodies in guiding relevant government policies, and close to three in five (58%) would look to professional bodies to know more about the professions they cover.

Younger respondents perceive professional bodies less favourably than the older cohorts: half of 18-24 year olds (51%) agree that professional bodies can help guide government on relevant policies, compared with two thirds of those aged 65+ (67%). Three quarters of those aged 65+ (75%) say they would trust a professional more if they belonged to a professional body, compared to less than half (47%) of 18-24 year olds.

## The main perceived value of qualifications from professional bodies is that they raise standards and help people earn more

For professional bodies, familiarity leads to favourability: 76% of those who know about professional bodies agree that if a professional belonged to such a body they would trust them more, compared to 46% of those who have never heard of professional bodies.

Conversely, only a minority of Britons associate professional bodies with negative statements: less than three in ten (28%) agree that professional bodies are out of touch with the real world.

Those who know something about professional bodies are much more likely to disagree with these negative statements than those who have never heard of professional bodies: over half (54%) of those with some knowledge disagree that professional bodies are out of touch, while one in five (20%) of those who have never heard of professional bodies disagree.

The main perceived value of qualifications from professional bodies is that they raise standards and help people earn more (71% and 72% of British adults respectively agree). However, half of Britons (50%) say that having a professional qualification does not ensure quality or skills, and views are split on whether professional qualifications are as respected as academic qualifications: a third agree that they are not (32%), two in five (39%) disagree and 29% don't know.

Older cohorts and people who know something about professional bodies are much more likely to agree on the value of professional qualifications than younger groups and those who have never heard of such bodies. For example, a vast majority of those who know something about professional bodies agree that their qualifications help raise standards (83%), compared to 57% of those who have never heard of professional bodies. However, those aged 65+ are also more likely than those aged 18-24 to say that having a professional qualification does not ensure quality or skill (53% compared to 33%).

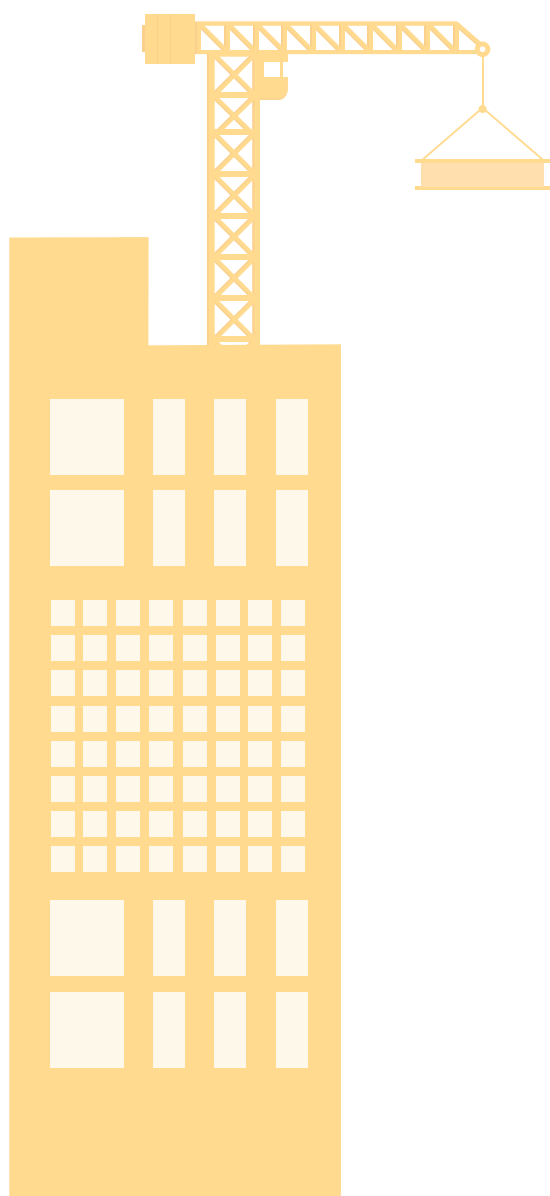


Figure 6

**Which of the following statements best describes how aware you are, if at all, of professional bodies working in each of the following sectors?** [Base: All respondents who have heard of professional bodies (n=1,635)]

	NET: Heard of	NET: Know about them	I am a member of a professional body in this sector	I know something about professional bodies in this sector	I have heard of professional bodies in this sector, but don't know anything about them	I have never heard of professional bodies in this sector
Healthcare	93%	41%	3%	39%	51%	7%
Education	91%	44%	3%	41%	47%	9%
Law	89%	32%	1%	31%	57%	11%
Finance/ accountancy	87%	34%	3%	32%	53%	13%
<b>Construction</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>26%</b>
Management/ business	73%	21%	1%	21%	51%	27%
Property	71%	19%	1%	18%	52%	29%
Engineering	68%	20%	2%	18%	48%	32%
Sales/ marketing/ media	65%	16%	-	15%	50%	35%
IT	57%	16%	1%	15%	42%	43%



Figure 7

**Thinking about professional bodies, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**  
[Base: All respondents (n=2012)]

	Agree strongly	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Disagree strongly	Don't know
I would trust a professional more if I knew that they were a member of a professional body	11%	54%	13%	3%	20%
Professional bodies can help guide government on relevant policies	9%	52%	11%	2%	25%
If I wanted to know more about a particular profession, I would look to the professional body for that profession	8%	50%	17%	3%	22%
Professional bodies only look out for the interests of their members, not the general public	8%	32%	28%	5%	27%
Professional bodies are out of touch with the real world	6%	22%	30%	6%	35%

Figure 8

**Some professional bodies allow their members to study for qualifications in their field. Thinking about qualifications offered by professional bodies, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?** [Base: All respondents (n=2,012)]

	Agree strongly	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Disagree strongly	Don't know
Professional qualifications help people to earn more	17%	55%	8%	2%	17%
Professional qualifications raise standards	16%	56%	9%	2%	17%
Professional qualifications are useful if you want to work abroad	15%	45%	8%	1%	31%
Professional qualifications help to protect the public	10%	47%	14%	4%	24%
Having a professional qualification does not ensure quality or skill	12%	39%	28%	5%	17%
Professional qualifications are not as respected as academic qualifications	5%	27%	34%	5%	29%

NB: Percentages have been rounded and therefore may not total 100%.



## CHALLENGES

The challenges facing professional bodies within construction can be crudely divided, if far from perfectly, into those particular to the industry and those related to the wider world.

The challenges related to the industry are well rehearsed within The Edge Commission's recently published report on the future of professionalism, *Collaboration for Change*<sup>x</sup>. It pulls no punches, stating that: "... the threats and pressures for change that the professions face, if not yet existential, are real and profound, and demand change."

A number of views influence its findings. Prominent among them is that the gap between professions is blurring, driven by commercial, social and technical change. Additionally, there is a rapidly changing physical and economic environment, driven by mega trends such as climate change and globalisation. This all has huge implications for the professional bodies.

The report's prescription, boiled down, is that they should look to greater collaboration: a view which would be endorsed by many of the professions including the CIOB.

The report sees the need for a more standardised approach to ethics and the public interest, more inter-disciplinary education, greater control over the competence and quality of the service delivered, greater sharing of knowledge and more pooling of resources. That represents a huge to-do list for professional bodies, but it is achievable.

The inevitable expansion in the uptake of BIM will in many ways crystallise these challenges and force change, through encouraging firms and professionals to work more collaboratively and in a more inter-disciplinary and transparent fashion.

It would be naïve to imagine that the solution simply lies in creating one large construction industry professional body. Construction is too complex a business and too riven with tensions to make that an obvious and easy route to take. But discussions will focus on how the industry professional bodies can work closer together and almost certainly there will be talk over potential mergers.

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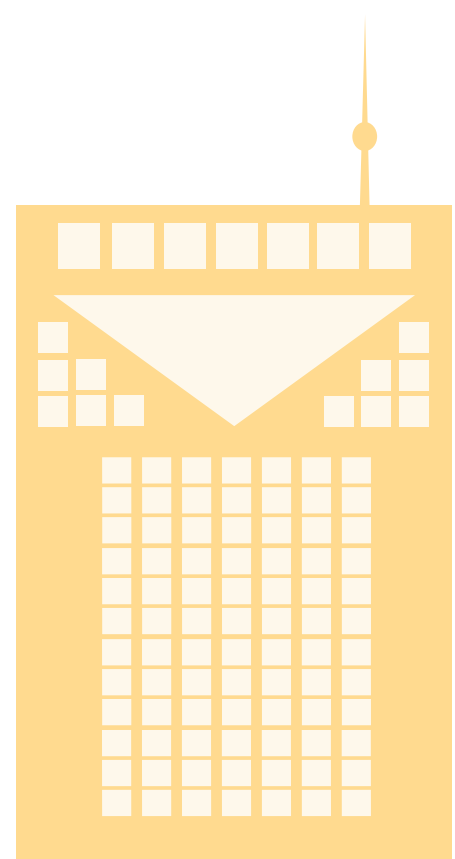
“... the threats and pressures for change that the professions face, if not yet existential, are real and profound, and demand change.”

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Whatever the paths chosen by individual professional bodies, the next decade will be one of challenges and opportunities, but, most of all, one of change.

Within this context it is essential that professional bodies fulfil as best they can their central role. And in this regard within the initial polling we have conducted among the public and MPs, we see emerging many of the challenges and opportunities.

Most evident is that professional bodies need to communicate better with the outside world. They need to be more outward facing.





There is an evident gap between what those within a professional body might see as its role and operational effectiveness (as presented, for instance, within the strand of this report) and what the public and MPs see.

Encouragingly, that gap is far less evident when it is just the views of MPs and the public who have a greater understanding and familiarity of professional bodies.

But better communication is not the be all and end all of the challenges. Only a third of MPs and a similar proportion of the public believe that professional bodies fairly balance the interests of their members with their duty to the public. Professional bodies are not seen as vehicles of social mobility. They are not seen as being hugely effective in prompting international trade.

Crucially, however, there is a strong core of MPs and the public that see professional bodies as effective and useful in forming policy. The strong sense from the surveys is that they and their views are trusted.

From this platform, with better communication and with careful listening, professional bodies have the capacity to make great strides to improve not only the careers and welfare of their members, but the social and economic prospects for the public at large.

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**Crucially, however, there is a strong core of MPs and the public that see professional bodies as effective and useful in forming policy.**

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# CONCLUSION

Professional bodies in construction face major challenges and major change. Globalisation, environmental stress, commercial pressures, information technology and cultural shifts are all forcing the industry to adapt rapidly.

This change will inevitably impact on the way professionals operate and in turn will alter the respective roles of the professions and the professional bodies that represent them.

Where possible, change must be managed. Some, however, will not be. But these unmanaged changes must be met. Where they are appropriate they should be embraced. Where they are contrary to the public good or the wider interests of the industry they should be challenged and an alternative path sought.

It is therefore important for professional bodies to understand and explore how they add value and how they can add greater value to their professions, the wider industry, the economy and the public good.

This report is a step in that direction, seeking to describe how professional bodies in construction can, and do, add social and economic value. It has also sought to establish how the role of professional bodies is perceived by both the public and those who make policy on behalf of the public.

Some key themes have emerged as a result of this investigation. These all need closer scrutiny.

- ▶ Much of the value added by professional bodies and the scope to add greater value is not well recognised.
- ▶ The opportunity for professional bodies to be more active in policy making is there to be grasped.
- ▶ There is a need to increase the awareness among the public and policy makers of the existence and purpose of professional bodies. This in turn would create greater dialogue.
- ▶ Professional bodies in construction must look to the value they currently add and where they can potentially add greater value as they seek to address the profound changes many within the industry see as inevitable in the decade or so ahead.

One vital point evident from the survey work is that professional bodies do command significant trust among the public and MPs. Furthermore this trust appears stronger among those who are familiar with professional bodies than are unfamiliar.

In the past, professional bodies have tended to be responsive rather than pro-active in the field of policy making. For sound reasons they have tended to keep more to narrow technical issues than broader policy.

There are signs that this approach is changing. It is certainly true of the CIOB and the other professional bodies in construction.

This report and the supporting survey evidence suggest that such a change is for the better.

Better for the profession. Better for the industry. Better for policy makers. And better for the public good.

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**One vital point evident from the survey work is that professional bodies do command significant trust among the public and MPs.**

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# Appendix A

## List of construction industry professional bodies

Association for Project Management (APM)

Association for Project Safety (APS)

British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM)

British Institute of Interior Design (BIID)

Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE)

Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT)

Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE)

Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)

Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT)

Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)

Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering (CIPHE)

Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)

Chartered Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors (ICES)

Institute of Clerks of Works and Construction Inspectorate (ICWCI)

Institute of Demolition Engineers (IDE)

Institute of Specialist Surveyors and Engineers (ISSE)

Institute of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE)

Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)

Landscape Institute (LI)

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)

Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

## Appendix B

### The Edge Commission ‘Collaboration for Change’ (extract)

#### **‘The case for the professions’**

The case for the professions is inextricably linked to the functions performed both by the institutions and by their members, and their value therefore largely depends upon the extent to which they can, through their institutions, convert those principles that differentiate them from non-professionals into standards of conduct and service that also differentiate them.

At the institutional and individual level, this includes:

#### **At the institutional level**

- Setting standards of competence and conduct for members (raising the bar).
- Setting standards and frameworks for education.
- Regulating members.
- Improving the standing of members in the market (particularly internationally).
- Maintaining/developing a collective body of knowledge, and investing in research.
- Providing industry leadership.
- Developing new areas of action for members.
- Serving the public interest.
- A source of independent and unbiased specialist expertise.
- Providing a collective voice in society and engaging in public discourse.

#### **At the individual level**

- Achieving the entry level of competence.
- Earning the badge of membership/status.
- Keeping up to date;
- Observing the code of conduct.
- Acting in the public interest (for some institutions).
- Providing mutual, collegiate and social support.

Taken together, these attributes and actions add up to a powerful reason for being on the part of the institutions, and a reason for belonging on the part of individual members; and they still represent the core of a valuable differentiation from those who practise outside the organised professions.

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