

Monthly round-up of news from the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers



Race 'still an issue' as industry lags behind in diversity progress

An inquiry into race representation in the construction industry has found little change after more than a decade of opportunity.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's *Inquiry into race in the construction industry* report was published in August and highlights the persistent under-representation of non-white ethnic minority workers in the industry – despite causes and potential solutions having been identified at least 10 years ago.

While the report did find examples of good practice and positive steps being taken to tackle under-representation, it is now calling on the industry to take constructive action.

The next step for the commission is to engage with industry bodies and stakeholders, including relevant government departments, unions, education providers and careers advisers, as well as key co-ordinating bodies such as the national apprenticeship service and sector skills councils.

The Construction Industry Council (CIC), which represents the sector's professional institutions, is calling for the industry to unite to address the sector's poor performance on diversity.

Keith Clarke, chairman of the CIC said: 'The construction sector should recruit a workforce which reflects our clients' needs. A diverse

workforce brings new skills, makes that sector more appealing to a wider pool of recruits, and improves staff retention. And on an international scale, it gives us a complete advantage. We can no longer afford to lag behind the legal and medical professions.'

Consultation launched on TSRGD 2002

Sadiq Khan, minister for transport, announced a public consultation on proposed amendments to the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 during this year's IHIE traffic signs conference.

The Department for Transport's Richard Creese outlined the proposals at the event. *Pictured are department staff enjoying a break during IHIE traffic signs 2009.*



MEMBER PROFILE: Martyn Grimwood MIHIE EngTech

Martyn Grimwood is highway design engineer for Capital Highways, and the company's CAD manager. He also co-manages its traffic management department, but came into highways through an unusual route – an early interest in graphic design.

In his first job at an engineering assembly works, Mr Grimwood became so good at correcting flawed design drawings that he was sent to study master computer-aided design (CAD) at night school. Maunsells then recruited him.

After a spell for Essex CC at Witham, he joined Capital Highways in 2003 as part of its original team.

A fluency in CAD has enabled Mr Grimwood to develop his highways design skills to a high level. Some 60% of his time is now spent as lead designer for Essex CC under the three-year, £4.2m programme to deliver the 'Colchester cycle town' project.

The cycle town initiative attracts joint county council and outside statutory funding, and involves not only the design of the route for year one, but the selection of the routes for years two and three. Consequently, there is a great deal of interaction, not only with the technical team, but also with the public, cycling groups, and road-users more generally.

Even working on small-scale projects engages the public. Preparing a cycle path through Colchester Country Park entailed 'finding an acceptable balance between cyclists who wanted a clear route and proper night lighting, and park rangers, and users who wanted minimal intrusion and no lighting', he says.

The circle was squared by installing solar-powered low lights, and using a new track surface which bonds glass fibre chopped up in resin to provide a golden coloured surface, which was bounded by timber edging. This sympathetic solution was well received.

Mr Grimwood has a clear vision of where he wants to go, and as part of that, has achieved the new professional certificate in traffic sign design offered by IHIE.

He says this gave proper recognition to his wide familiarity with this complex and arcane technical area, and also enabled him to gain his EngTech qualification. Together with his work on Colchester cycle town, this will add to the portfolio he is preparing for achieving his IEng.

Valuing his IHIE membership for the way in which it 'tells people



Capital Highways' Martyn Grimwood

you have right training and skills, because they know the process IHIE takes people through', Mr Grimwood says he finds the contacts made through the branch, and the continuing personal development (CPD) days IHIE provides, very helpful. He is now looking forward to the possibility of taking part in IHIE activities nationally, because of their value not only to him but also to the profession.

He encourages young people to join the profession because 'it is such a diverse industry, in which you don't always know what you will be doing from one day to the next, and – above all – you often get to see and use what you have done.'

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