



West of England  
Development  
Conference

#WOEDC19

# West of England Development Conference

## Conference Report

Tuesday, 8th October 2019  
Brunel's Old Station, Bristol

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# Foreword



**Keith Griffiths,**  
Managing Director,  
Built Environment  
Networking

Diversity, inclusivity, climate emergency. Three major topics that were promoted up by speakers, partners and delegates alike throughout the third annual West of England development conference; all of which have a huge role to play in the placemaking and development agenda in the South West.

The conference was notable not only for a showcase of future major development schemes across the West of England Combined Authority area but also for the two excellent keynote speeches from Sado Jirde (Director, Black South West Network) and Alistair Wall (Deputy Youth MP for Bristol City Youth Council) who are moulding the city of Bristol and beyond in regards to the future cities agenda.

We were privileged to hear from Andrew Billingham from YTL who gave our 400 delegates an exclusive update on the Bristol Arena project which is undoubtedly the most topical scheme within the city.

Taking on board feedback from 2018, we trialled a new session focused on the South West Peninsula whereby for the first time the conference developers and decision makers from Cornwall, Devon and Somerset were invited to share intelligence on their forthcoming major schemes.

This conference grows every year and we are already working on organising 2020's event; we are always open to suggestions for speakers that you'd like to hear from moreover, if you want to place your brand and services at the forefront of decision makers and work givers in the region please get in touch with me or one of my team directly so we can help you out!

**See you next year,  
Keith**

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# From the Keynotes



**Sado Jirde**

Director, Black South West Network  
 @BlackSWNet

Sado Jirde, the Director of the Black South West Network (BSWN) delivered a hard-hitting keynote decrying systemic discrimination:

**THERE IS AN ENTRENCHED INEQUALITY, AND DEEP SEATED, CULTURAL, STRUCTURAL SYSTEM AT PLAY THAT PLACES BARRIERS IN THE WAY OF ALL PEOPLE HAVING THE SAME CHANCES AND THE FAIR DISTRIBUTION OF DIVIDENDS ACROSS SOCIETY.**

Enduring racial and socio-economic segregation in Bristol was emphasised by Jirde who described the city as being “spatially segregated”. Bristol was a pivotal city in the British civil rights movement for being the site of the 1963 Bristol Bus Boycott, which led to the passing of the 1968 Race Relations Act which banned discrimination in housing.

Jirde cited the fact that “60% of Bristol’s BME community live in the most disadvantaged wards” which are among the most deprived in the country, whilst the 6 predominantly White British areas were amongst the most affluent.



Higher levels of unemployment, less skills and worse health outcomes are also faced by residents in the less affluent areas of Bristol, which has been ranked 7th worse for inequality as a district.

Jirde was positive about the achievements and possibilities for the West of England region saying that “We are lucky to be living and working in an area with potential such as the West of England has.” She praised the creative, digital and high tech industries that the region has attracted, highlighting the intersection of these modern industries with traditional industries as demonstrating the strength of the region.

However Jirde couched this with the necessity of fairly distributing that economic potential, she said:

**IT IS CLEAR NOW ONCE THE GROWTH IS ACHIEVED THE PRIORITY IS MAKING SURE THE GROWTH IS ACHIEVED EQUALLY.**

The BSWN is working on developing an institution to close this divide, working with local government and business, Jirde said “At the core of a long-term economic inclusion strategy is the development of a BME enterprise and impact hub which will incubate and grow BME lead businesses across the region’s priority sectors and develop international links through the 147 diaspora communities that live in Bristol”

Jirde concluded with a message to delegates, emphasising the need to not let these issues fall to the wayside: “I urge you to work with us, I urge you to always consider the inequality I’ve described this morning in your strategic thinking and business planning, I urge you to place inclusion at the heart of everything you do and not just a separate strand of your work.”



**Alistair Wall**

Deputy Youth MP, Bristol City Youth Council  
 @BristolCYC

“414 days ago when Greta Thunberg went on strike no one could have predicted how massive this has become” said Alistair Wall, Deputy Youth MP at the Bristol City Youth Council of the growing movement of young people trying to raise awareness of the ongoing climate emergency. Wall continued, and described the crisis as the “one issue that affects every aspect of our lives.” He chastised the government for a lack of ambition in their targets, suggesting that the UK should be net carbon negative by 2050 to be a world leader and “at least reverse the damage it has caused.”

The lack of action to reduce waste was also of concern to Wall, who cited a 2017 study that showed only 45.7% of household waste was recycled. He further saw inaction on government efforts to reduce single use plastics, seeing them as “naught but piecemeal.” Wall drew attention to the extent of global waste as only 9% of all the plastic ever produced has been recycled.

Wall also spoke forcefully in the need to change in attitudes of consumer culture “From a consumptive presumption, to a sustainable circular future.” Despite this, he also decried the tendency for discussions of environmentalism to focus on individualised



solutions to the wider issue, he said: “We have spent decades pushing the burden of systematic errors on to the individual, it’s not the general public who are failing, it’s government, big business, industry and those with vested interests in the fossil fuel industry who have failed the planet since the mid-1800s.”

The usage of fossil fuels in electricity generation is currently 30% of total energy production in the UK. The importance of phasing this out was highlighted by Wall who touted the UK’s “potential to generate 100% of our electricity from renewables resources.” Wall suggested the UK and particularly Scotland’s huge potential for off-shore wind and also said that:

**WE HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO 100% OF OUR ELECTRICITY FROM RENEWABLE RESOURCES.**

In recent years wind has emerged as the most cost effective form of energy generation and makes up around half of the UK total energy production from renewables.

The need for global action was also highlighted by Wall, who said that “If the UK reduces its emissions to zero, global emissions will reduce by a grand total of 1%.” He spoke of the responsibility of developed nations to lead on climate change:

**RICHER COUNTRIES WHO HAVE BEEN EMITTING CARBON FOR FAR LONGER FOR ANY OTHER, TO NEED HELP LESS WELL-OFF REGIONS.**

Wall gave advice to developers to incorporate these concerns, telling delegates to “work through the lens of sustainability” and question “Is it carbon neutral? Is it zero waste? If the answer is no, how can you make it yes as soon as possible”. The deputy youth MP ended his speech with a strong message for attendees: “Let’s not wait until next week, next month or next year, let’s act now and guarantee a future for us all.”



# A View from



What is the West of England, a region, a sub-region, a Powerhouse like the north, an Engine like the midlands or something unique? That was one of the big debates at the West of England Economic Development Conference alongside how, in promoting economic growth, it is delivered in a responsible manner when addressing climate change?

We heard from a range of speakers and conference participants about how they were encouraging, managing and delivering responsible growth by being innovative in a geographically and environmentally diverse part of the UK. And perhaps, through responsible innovation we can shape the South West's Growth agenda and our own unique identity?

Keynote speaker, Sado Jirde's conference-opening speech demonstrated on-going diversity challenges. One of Sado's drivers is for BAME communities to establish an equal dialogue with decision makers around social and economic development. With their strong research and data led approach, the BSWN can qualify the effects of inequality on our economy and help shape change.

The keynote address by Alistair Wall, Deputy Youth MP for Bristol City Youth Council provided an insight into the priorities of those generations that are now making their mark on business and society. His inspiring address told us that climate change is a priority that must be balanced with the need to grow industry, commerce as well as meeting housing need. This was echoed by others as the continual corporate responsibility shift takes place across the south west as we pursue growth in the region's contribution to UK GDP.

Hearing from Claire Pearce of This is Gravity, highlighted the notion that addressing climate change whilst delivering economic growth is at the forefront of major brownfield projects. It takes innovation and vision to trailblaze this journey, something that is embraced in Sedgemoor.

Whilst climate change is a big part of the development jigsaw, it is not the only part and we heard from many, including the University of Bristol about their community placemaking expectations for the Temple Meads Campus and how improving the character of an area through different land uses and travel connections intends to change public perception.

Diversity of place is no more apparent than the discussion about how different growth in the Peninsula is. We heard about funding from Cllr Mark Coker of Plymouth City Council and their active inward investment strategy supporting regeneration. We also heard from Al Titterton of Cornwall Airport Newquay and their work with Virgin Space which developed a climate change debate about how carbon impacts can be rebalanced.



The building communities for the future debate posed many questions about how to deliver sustainable housing within successful and vibrant communities. Affordability, homelessness and achieving viable design quality were all recognised challenges. Julia Bevan spoke on the role that the built-to-rent market is playing in community agenda and whether place keeping will emerge from rhetoric around placemaking and become mainstream? Jeremy Sweetland of the Bristol Housing Festival demonstrated how a non-delivery organisation can effect positive change and bring innovative thought in the local housing market to assist these challenges.

During the conference, individual South West businesses displayed true innovation and market resilience. However, unlike the Midlands Engine or Northern Powerhouse their collective strength, under a single banner, to communicate as one voice with Government and to press home the value of investment, has yet to take shape. At Stantec we see a region made of strong, characterful, diverse places and businesses connected by its core movement corridors. The collective challenge is to build the regional leadership, establish a clear long-term vision and set of priorities supported by infrastructure investment that can drive growth and transform the economy into sectors fit for the future. The opportunity for the region is perhaps therefore, to create a national voice around clean growth and innovation corridors, linking Cornwall to Gloucestershire and Wales, to showcase the best of the South West in order to attract inward investment and fulfil the undoubted economic potential. Indeed, it seems Government is listening and since the close of the conference The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick of (MHCLG) and Rt Hon Alun Cairns (Wales) have announced a cross-border 'Western Gateway' powerhouse...watch this space?

# From the Keynotes



**Andrew Billingham**

Managing Director,  
YTL Arena Bristol

🐦 @YTL\_Arena

## YTL'S SKY-HIGH AMBITIONS FOR NEW ARENA IN BRISTOL

Malaysian developer YTL Developments revealed details of their plans for the former Brabazon hangers on the derelict Filton Airfield.

Plans for the hangars, the birthplace of the Concorde aircraft, centre around the construction of a new 17,000-seater arena set in the central hanger, and YTL is currently awaiting planning determination which will be decided on in Q1 2020.

Andrew Billingham, Managing Director for the arena described the ways the arena development will revitalise a wider area:

**THE ARENA IS JUST ONE PART OF A MUCH BIGGER PROJECT TO CREATE A THRIVING NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD THAT IS GOING TO EMERGE CALLED BRABAZON.**

The total investment in the new area is expected to total £1.5bn, bringing a major boost to Bristol's economy, which Billingham described as a "catalyst of regeneration and prosperity for the city."

The arena is planned to be the UK's first "hybrid bowl", which will allow the arena to downscale for events that require a more intimate stage experience, being able to move down to as low as 4000 capacity.

It will also be designed to have disability access, which is something that other arenas have faced press criticism over, and higher tier seats in the arena will have a dining experience, with 27% of the arena space dedicated to food and drink.

The arena plans are acting as "an accelerator" for the Brabazon community development which already has the green light for 2,600 new homes. The development will also be supported by the construction of new schools and workplaces to ensure that the neighbourhood will be able to thrive.

Placemaking has been key to YTL's approach to the new development which will also



include a new park and leisure hub.

Billingham described how if it was a lone development it would struggle with viability:

**AN ARENA IN ITS OWN FORM WILL ONLY OPERATE BETWEEN 100-120 DAYS A YEAR, AND THAT IS NOT SUSTAINABLE.**

Wanting it to be the beating heart of the new community, YTL are planning to build "a leisure hub to really drive the area as a 365-day destination, a place where people can come to eat, work and play" in the western hanger.

On the other side of the arena in the eastern hanger YTL are focusing on developing a large exhibition space, Billingham said: "The 11,000 sqm east hanger will provide space for large trade shows but could also support the arena when in operation."

The arena is a key part to making the Brabazon area a truly thriving, viable neighborhood and leading to further development in the city.



# The West of England; Challenges, Opportunities &

## Panel Members:



**Chair: Phil Laycock**

Director, Built Environment  
Networking  
@BENetworking



**Lucy Shomali**

Director of Development  
& Environment, North  
Somerset Council  
@NorthSomersetC



**Colin Molton**

Executive Director – Growth  
& Regeneration, Bristol City  
Council  
@BristolCouncil

## WESTERN POWERHOUSE BEING DRIVEN BY ATOMS & ENTERPRISE

The Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Station is the “largest foreign direct investment and inward investment project in the country” said Claire Pearce, Director of Planning and Economic Growth of This is Gravity Ltd.

With a building cost of up to £22.5bn the new power plant will utilise cutting-edge EPR technology and a third-generation nuclear reactor developed by EDF Energy, the owners and operators of the plant.

The plant is driving wider growth in the local economy, and Pearce described the legacy of the project in the form of Gravity, a new Enterprise Zone set to be delivered by the Salamanca Group subsidiary This is Gravity Ltd.

The Enterprise Zone will “create 6000 jobs, 5000 homes, huge investment in educational infrastructure for the long-term, new schools and a flood-defence project.”

Pearce described the proposed scheme: “This is Gravity is a new company centered at J25 of the M5. It’s a 655-acre Enterprise Zone, so it’s a bigger scale than the site at Hinckley and there’s the opportunity of having new rail links connecting the site with the wider region.”



This is Gravity is looking to the future for the project, designing an “innovative mixed-use campus” with a focus on sustainable transport and technology. Pearce summarised their objectives:

### WE WANT TO LOOK AT WHAT THE ART OF THE POSSIBLE IS IN TERMS OF ACHIEVING THE FUTURE OF MOBILITY AND CLEAN GROWTH IN SOMERSET.

The Bristol Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone is a major development project that is being constructed around the Bristol Temple Meads railway station. As part of the project the University of Bristol is building substantially on their estates, which forms part of their Innovation Campus Strategy.

Colin Molton, Executive Director of Growth & Regeneration at the Bristol City Council, said: “The university campus will see half a billion investment going into that project alone, and we’re working hour by hour to make that project a success.”

The council is steering the development of Bristol to deal with challenges in the retail market, Molton explained: “A city centre revitalisation group has been established to look at how we are going to repurpose much of the retail space going forward, considering the change in shopping habits.”

Housing delivery is another key objective of Bristol City Council, and Molton described the improvements the council has made in recent years: “We now have about seven different routes to market including our own housing delivery company Gorham homes.”

North Somerset Council have joined Bristol in their ambition to become carbon neutral, having also recently declared a climate emergency. Councillor Dine Romero said:

# The Future



**Councillor  
Dine Romero**

Leader, Bath & North East  
Somerset Council  
@bathnes



**Edward Rowberry**

Chief Executive, Bristol  
& Bath Regional Capital  
@BristolBathRCap



**Claire Pearce**

Director of Planning and  
Economic Development,  
This is Gravity

## THE IMPORTANT THING FOR US HAS BEEN NOT JUST DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY, BUT DOING SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

Romero continued: “Since we formed the administration in May we have created a new role within the council who is our climate emergency cabinet member, who is tasking”. The council has recently joined the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) to allow a combined approach to development.

Lucy Shomali, Director of Development & Environment at North Somerset Council discussed the development happening across the region and their need to acquire funding support: “We’ve accessed high street funding to invest in the town centre at Weston-Super-Mare and we’ve other funding has enabled us to deliver our first new homes as North Somerset Council. We don’t have any HRAs, so we’ve had to access grants and use our own funding for that.”

Interconnectivity in the North Somerset region is set to improve with the construction of the North-South link road

underway and funding approved for the Metro West rail service. The council has also developed a skills strategy to try to deal with social deprivation in the Weston area.

Shomali described the region as being:

## ON THE CUSP OF UNLOCKING HUGE OPPORTUNITY.

The Chief Executive of Bristol & Bath Regional Capital (BBRC), Edward Rowberry discussed how recent developments are incorporating their inclusion agenda. He described the goal is to move away from “a tale of two cities, to one city where everyone can share in hope and aspiration.”

Rowberry discussed how authorities have begun to incorporate such values: “Local industrial strategy is starting to share values with some of the stuff I’ve spoken about around inclusivity and clean growth”.

He concluded with a hopeful message: “If you start from a shared value set there’s a lot that can be done from a collaborative perspective.” This collaboration provides the basis for a truly energetic region.





# Placemaking in the West of England

## Panel Members:



**Chair: John Boughton**

Deputy Managing Director, Willmott Dixon  
@WillmottDixon



**Kirsten Durie**

Senior Development Manager, Network Rail Property  
@networkrail



**Iestyn Lewis**

Chief Executive, Rengen Developments

## WEST OF ENGLAND PLANS TO BUILD ON WORLD-LEADING TECH SUCCESS

The planned £300m Temple Meads Enterprise Campus at the University of Bristol will “cement Bristol’s position” as a leader in technology according to the university’s Deputy Vice Chancellor Guy Orpen. He described their ambition as:

**TO SUPPORT AND ENABLE WHAT IS BRITAIN’S MOST SUCCESSFUL TECHNOLOGY CLUSTER AROUND BRISTOL AND BATH.**

The University is developing local partnerships with the community, government, SMEs and industry to enable it to develop a campus that is engaged with the local community.

A £100m Digital Futures Faculty, a state-of-the-art cutting-edge laboratory, forms part of their estate masterplan. The faculty will partner social scientists and technology experts



to try to research many of the ramifications of technological change, in what Orpen described as their “biggest ever research grant” which would allow what to think about:

**WHAT A DIGITAL WORLD REALLY IS AND HOW WE WANT TO LIVE IN IT.**

The Temple Meads campus will integrate the university more with the wider city, with projects such as the Twilight Temple Quarter which will create a thriving new area accessible to the public which will be bustling throughout the evening and late-night. A similar approach to businesses will be taken, with partnership spaces being open to both larger firms and SMEs, as well as the wider community.

Sustainability is a key consideration of the university, which was the first university in the country to declare a climate emergency. The campus will be car-free, utilising the nearby



**Lucinda Mitchell**

Project Director, First Base  
@FirstBaseUrban



**Professor Guy Orpen**

Deputy Vice Chancellor - New Campus Development, University of Bristol  
@BristolUni

rail connection and as well as being the university’s most sustainable campus.

Network Rail are also intrinsically connected to the University’s plans. Kirsten Durie, Principal Development Manager of Network Rail Property, said: “We now actually have funding for a new eastern entrance which will help our friends at the university create their new campus.”

Network Rail also plan to work on innovation with the university, which will provide mutual benefits.

One new technology Network Rail are using is digital signalling, which is gradually being adopted across the West of England. Digital signalling helps to make better use of current track capacity, as it will enable trains to run closer together whilst remaining safe.

Iestyn Lewis, Chief Executive of Rengen Developments who are a firm actively focused on redeveloping city brownfield sites, expounded on their recent activity in the region: “We have a £150m pipeline currently, and it’s all privately-funded. We’ve just disposed of £60m in assets in Bath and Bristol, mainly student accommodation but also mixed-use.”



The use of joint ventures is key to Rengen’s business model which often involves working with local authorities. A recent project of Rengen’s is the Scala building in Bath, a former cinema which was regenerated in partnership with the Co-Op and Norland College.

First Base’s Project Director Lucinda Mitchell also shared intel into their schemes, and they’re a more recent entrant to the marketplace in Bristol having only recently completed the second round of consultation on their debut project, the Soapworks. The Grade II listed building, formerly occupied by Gardiner Haskins, dates back to the 1860s.

Mitchell expressed First Base’s enthusiasm to paying respect to this heritage:

**SCHEMES SHOULD BE RESPECTFUL OF HERITAGE IN TERMS OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS, LIKE THE ONE WE ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE ON THE SOAPWORKS SUITES.**

For First Base and Mitchell developing locales with a sense of place is paramount, and the Soapworks are no different. Carrying out extensive community consultation has been a vital aspect of this approach, particularly considering the fact that the developer is not yet established in the area.

Delivering 20% affordable homes, lots for independent traders, space for creative industries, walking and cycle improvements, sustainability and the addition of publicly accessible areas have all been core aspects of the development that originated through these consultations.

Mitchell described how “placemaking for First Base is not just about buildings, it’s about people and delivering benefits and those benefits which will be relevant not just now but in the future.”

The West of England’s technological success gives the region a key draw to drive development, and these ambitious development plans are keen to seize on that.



# Infrastructure; Supporting and Connecting Communities

## Panel Members:



**Chair: Vicki Redman**

Partner, Womble Bond Dickinson

[@WBD\\_UK](#)



**Kelly Hillman**

Head of Acquisitions, Homes England

[@HomesEngland](#)



**David Eccles**

Head of Stakeholder Engagement for Hinkley Point C, EDF Energy

[@edfenergy](#)

## £1.7BN ROAD IMPROVEMENTS PROPOSED AT A303 NEAR STONEHENGE

The A303 Corridor is a site of a potential major development, with a new £1.7bn road upgrade proposed near Stonehenge. A decision is set to be made in Spring 2020.

Derek Parody, Project Director at Highways England, specified details of the development, saying that the whole section of road, which has been long beleaguered with congestion, will be upgraded to a dual-carriageway “featuring a 2 mile 3.3km twin bore tunnel about 200m from the monument itself.”

To tackle the climate challenges faced in expanding roads, Parody outlined Highways England’s plans for sustainable transport: “Cycling in particular is top of the agenda and whenever we create a road, we’re also trying to create a cycle network. In this case that would be on what will become the disused A303.”

Homes England have been working with partners to deliver houses across the West of England and Head of Acquisitions Kelly Hillman told delegates about their recent successes:

**JUST LAST MONTH WE ANNOUNCED OVER £20M OF FUNDING THAT WILL UNLOCK OVER 1000 HOMES AND THAT INCLUDES SITES IN BRISTOL.**

Homes England are not solely concerned with the delivery of homes, but also making sure they are supported by appropriate infrastructure, with some of that £20m pot going towards “a range of products for infrastructure delivery.”

Wapping Wharf, a new harbourside community in Bristol, is being supported by £23.4m of Homes England funding and will deliver 256 homes, 81 of these homes are designated as affordable housing.



Hillman was keen to also point out Homes England’s success on smaller projects, pointing to the fact that Homes England were the “11th largest mortgage provider in the UK, in the last quarter with 2,000 SMEs registering their interest in Help to Buy.”

Embracing innovation is a key part of Homes England’s method of maximising housing delivery and quality. Hillman described their approach:

**WE’VE GOT TO SPEED UP HOUSING DELIVERY, MMC, DIVERSIFICATION, BRINGING IN NEW ENTRANTS, QUALITY AND PLACEMAKING.**

The organisation has also learnt from past mass housing strategies and has implemented strong design standards



**Councillor Nicola Beech**

Spatial Planning & City Design, Bristol City Council

[@BristolCouncil](#)



**Derek Parody**

Project Director, Highways England

[@HighwaysEngland](#)



**Tim Laverne**

Director Route Asset Management, Network Rail

[@networkrail](#)



to prevent production of generic stock. Hillman remarked: “I heard someone say that Homes England is bringing back design.”

The Hinkley Point C project is supporting communities in the region, said Head of Stakeholder Engagement at EDF Energy, David Eccles CBE.

He discussed their success in engaging with the surrounding community: “If you ask people if nuclear power should be part of the national mix around 50% say yes, but if you ask within 15 miles of Hinkley that goes up to 65%.”

The project has been accompanied by what Eccles dubbed a “huge investment in projects and infrastructure in the local community” which has completely transformed the area around the plant.

Investing in individuals and skills has also been a core part of what EDF Energy has achieved in the area around Hinkley with “450 apprenticeships created” so far.

The company is also advancing an inclusion agenda for women in construction, and Eccles cited early success with women comprising 40% of their newest cohort of crane operators and cited “massive investment” in that area.

Network Rail are making significant improvements to the rail

network across the West of England, which Tim Laverne, Director of Route Asset Management, dubbed the

**BIGGEST INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE SINCE BRUNEL WAS STALKING THESE HALLS [BRUNEL’S OLD STATION] SOME 170 YEARS AGO.**

The extensive upgrades are in part to cope with the surge in demand in the region, and Laverne commented on the exponential growth: “Bristol Temple Meads has seen quadrupling of its passenger usage each year, now up to some 12 million passengers.”

Upgrades to the rails have been integral to the modernisation which has included rail resilience upgrades on the network between Exeter and Newton Abbot, intended to last for 100 years. Network Rail has also electrified 150 miles worth of railway, as well as building a new control centre in Didcott.

The growing expansion in connectivity across the region can only be a positive thing for building the much sought regional cooperation in the West of England.





# The West of England Peninsula

## Panel Members:



**Chair:  
Phil Laycock**

Director, Built Environment Networking

[@BENetworking](#)



**Alexandra Wiley**

Head of Regeneration Projects, Clarion Housing

[@Clarion\\_Group](#)



**Scott Hammond**

Chief Executive, Eutopia Homes



**Al Titterington**

Managing Director, Cornwall Airport Newquay

[@Newquay\\_Airport](#)

## ONE GIANT LEAP FOR THE SOUTH-WEST PENINSULA

The claim to the largest space cluster outside of the US is set to be taken by Cornwall Newquay Airport, according to Al Titterington, Managing Director of the airport.

He said land surrounding the airport, which was formerly an RAF base until 2008, is set to be transformed. The site is already houses a partnership with Virgin Orbital, which is a new spaceport designed for horizontal launches of small satellites. Whilst this method is a core part of modern telecoms there hasn't been a single launch from the UK.

Titterington outlined the unique opportunities the area presents: "We have a large site of 700 acres for the airfield itself, 80 acres worth of business park land which is being developed and then we've got another 200 acres of land which is essentially earmarked for future development."

Another area that is developing high-tech industry in the that of Torbay, which recently saw the completion of an £8m Electronic Photonic Innovation Centre (EPIC). The scheme, which received funding from the council, LEP, the EU and the coastal communities fund has had a positive impact of the region according to Alan Denby, Director of Economic Strategy at TDA:



### WE HAVE A CLUSTER WITHIN TORBAY AND WE'RE EXTENDING IT ACROSS THE HEART OF THE SOUTHWEST.

Torbay Council has recently had a change in administration, which Denby said spurred a "desire for the council to be active" in terms of development.

A particular area which the council is trying to improve on is housing delivery, Denby said: "We need to accelerate the number of houses we are bringing forward; we are looking to be able to use the land to release funds."

Mark Coker, Cabinet Member at Plymouth City Council, described Plymouth as "Britain's Ocean City", referring to the authority's recent marketing campaign. Far from a hollow moniker, not only does the city have extensive maritime history but Plymouth has recently opened Britain's first marine park in September as well as having developed an extensive marine sector. Whilst according to Coker:

### PLYMOUTH AND THE SOUTH-WEST HAS TRADITIONALLY STRUGGLED WITH FUNDING, PARTICULARLY ON TRANSPORTATION.

The seaside city has had substantial success in achieving government funding, starting with £7.6m from the Transforming Cities Fund in 2014 and £90m as part of the Growth Deal One.

Coker described their current funding aspirations: "Now we're in the process of putting in our tranche 2 where we have been asked to put in a bid of £90m at the lowest, £220m at the highest."



**Belinda Purcell**

South West Regional Programme Manager - One Public Estate, Local Government Association

[@LGAcomms](#)



**Cllr Mark Coker**

Cabinet Member - Strategic Planning & Infrastructure, Plymouth City Council

[@plymouthcc](#)



**Alan Denby**

Director of Economic Strategy, TDA

[@TorbayTDA](#)

Plymouth is utilising its extensive funding to pursue a local plan with South Devon Council, which Coker claimed:

### WILL OPEN UP THE OPPORTUNITY FOR UP TO 26,000 NEW HOMES AND 19,000 NEW JOBS.

Plans include the Derriford Hospital Scheme, a £2.14m public transport access plan, the Derriford Transport Scheme - a £17.3m plan unlocking land for housing and industry, and the £4.25m East Corridor junction improvements.

One Public has also been investing heavily across the Peninsula, spending £30m over the course of 150 projects and Belinda Purcell, South West Regional Programme Manager, discussed details on their most recent scheme in Plymouth: "We've provided funded to bring forward the redevelopment of Plymouth railway station, it will bring forward jobs, homes and a new gateway to the city."

The masterplan includes a new University of Plymouth nursing and midwifery hub, a multi-story car park, the modernisation of station staff accommodation and new public spaces.

Purcell said that in Dorset the programme has funded modular housing for social care clients with complex needs, as well as "funding hospital redevelopments, blue light integration, public sector hubs and wider housing development across the region."

The programme has made a real impact in Exeter especially, helping to recycle developer profits into a future pipeline of housing, transport and energy projects.

Exeter is also receiving new developments by Eutopia Homes, according to Chief Executive Scott Hammond. He said: "We acquired 15 acres off Network Rail on the fringe of Exeter city centre, located fairly close to both campuses of the university. We're looking to develop 230 build to rent housing units and 65 retirement beds. We've been through various different design review panels as is standard practice for stakeholder engagement and we're hopeful of going to planning committee soon."

Clarion Housing are undertaking extensive work in Plymouth, redeveloping the 1960s Barne Barton social housing estate. Alexandra Wiley, Head of Regeneration Projects for the firm, explained the state of the area: "Barne Barton is one of our developments in Plymouth, it's a site built in the 1960s, all two bedroom flats, well past their sell by date, it's also mono-tenure social housing."

Wiley remarked on the strong community in the area, and Clarion formed a community steering group before even deciding to develop. The decision to preserve and build on the natural landscape came directly out of the consultation and has won the scheme a wildlife preservation award. She summarised the progress on the project: "We've got full planning approval for both phases and we're out on the DPP3 for the main contract for phase 1, hoping to start demolition just before Christmas 2019."

Through projects large and small, the peninsular region is starting to assert itself, on a national, international and outer space scale.





# Housing; Building Communities for the Future

## Panel Members:



**Chair: Colin Danks**

Director – Planning & Growth, PBA, now part of Stantec

[@PeterBretLLP](#)



**Julia Bevan**

Acquisitions Manager, Grainger Plc

[@graingerplc](#)



**Victor Da Cunha**

Chief Executive, Homes for the South West

[@Curo\\_Group](#)



**Lesley Metcalf**

Regional Head of Development, Sovereign Housing Association

[@sovereignha](#)



**Jeremy Sweetland**

Project Lead, Bristol Housing Festival

[@Bristol\\_HF](#)

## HOMES OF THE FUTURE BEING BUILT ACROSS THE WEST OF ENGLAND

Bristol Housing Festival have been exploring future methods of housing to try to tackle shortages within the housing market.

Jeremy Sweetland, Project Lead for the festival, said: “There is the reality of a systemic failure in the housing market, and there is a reality that there is a lot of distrust between the public, the developers and the politicians.”

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) were acknowledged as beneficial, but Sweetland took a measured view of them:

**THE PERCEPTION OF MODERN METHODS IS THAT THEY ARE CHEAPER AND QUICKER, BUT WHAT WE NEED TO BE VERY CLEAR ABOUT IS JUST GETTING QUICKER AND CHEAPER HOUSING IS NOT GOING TO GET US THE COMMUNITIES THAT WE NEED FOR THE LONG TERM.**

One major housing developer looking to increase their delivery in the region is Sovereign Housing Association, and the firms Regional Head of Development Lesley Metcalf shared their ambition: “The West of England is a key area for Sovereign. We currently have nine live sites in Bristol and South Gloucestershire which will deliver 890 affordable homes.”

Sovereign has recently formed a £112m partnership with Livewest to deliver 2,200 new homes across the West of England whilst other schemes are already ongoing, including their Harry Stoke scheme. Of that project Metcalf said: “Harry Stoke is a 50:50 JV with Crest Nicholson. Phase one will deliver 944 homes and 244 of those will be affordable.”

Metcalf discussed the associations’ achievements in the Bristol



Wapping Wharf development: “We’re set to deliver 55 PRS units which has enabled Homes England to release funding through their Build for Britain programme. This has kickstarted the whole development.”

Grainger, the UK’s largest listed residential landlord, are looking to expand further in the West of England, according to Julia Bevan, Acquisitions Manager for the company.

The firm have a strong a strong pipeline of PRS assets and Bevan spoke about their desire to form joint-ventures in the region after the success of the TFL JV’s in London:

**THOSE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS CAN GET REPLICATED ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND PARTICULARLY IN THE SOUTH-WEST.**

Curo Homes Chief Executive Victor Da Cunha represented Homes for the South West – a collaboration between 13 different housing associations all looking to tackle the housing crisis in the region.

Speaking of the scale of the problem he said:

**IT USED TO BE DIFFICULT TO BUY A HOME, BUT NOW YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT TO RENT A HOME AND IT IS A REALLY BIG CHALLENGE FOR THE REGION.**

House prices have become so expensive in parts of the region that in Bristol an average house will now cost 10 times the average salary, and in Bath it is up to 14 times as much.

Da Cunha described the need to create “long-term sustainable communities” and not just build without regards for sense of place. The organisation has successfully secured 11,000 of a targeted 16,000 homes that are needed to meet the growing demands in the region.



Da Cunha suggested that the organisation would seek collaboration to deal with the surge: “Over the next few years what we’ll be having to do is work with partners more and more.”

The housing crisis is acute in the West of England, but future technology could provide an answer to what is a mounting challenge.





# A Future View from



## WESTERN GATEWAY POWERHOUSE ANNOUNCED PROMISING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Western Gateway a cross-Severn partnership between the West of England and Southern Wales has been announced by the UK government on the November 1st, as a new way to bring prosperity and foster partnership in the region.

The partnership is intending to create a regional framework in the model of the Midlands Engine and Northern Powerhouse. We at Stantec feel that this will have the potential to accelerate growth in the area.

We have long seen the potential of the region, having led extensive projects across the West of England and South Wales. From it's 4 million strong population, to its world class universities and future-ready industries- it is a particularly strategic position.

The Western region is already a major hub for existing and growing high-tech industries, manufacturing and the creative

arts, and the increased regional cooperation will allow these industries to be build up further.

The economy of the Western Gateway region is actually larger than that of either Midlands Engine or Northern Powerhouse, so the founding of this partnership promises a very exciting opportunity which is overdue. Having a unified economic agenda for the West has long been discussed, but this is the first major step towards its formation.

The Partnership is being kickstarted by £400,000 from the Communities and Local Government agency to fund start-up businesses but that must be seen as the tip of the iceberg and a wider growth agenda. The formalisation of the Partnership will give a stronger national voice to the Western region, allowing us to benefit from the regionalised cooperation that other parts of the country have and develop around such frameworks.



# Conference Photos





# Conference Photos





# Conference Partners

## National Partner



## Conference Session Partners



## Conference Report Partner



## National Frameworks Partner



## National Lanyard Partner



## National BIM Partner



## National Core Partners



## Conference Partners



# Save the date



8th October 2020

Bristol  
08:00 – 17:00

## GET INVOLVED:

Interested in having your brand at the forefront of the biggest regional discussion focused on economic growth, regeneration and development?

Get involved early and secure your spot as a partner to position your brand as a thought leader and support to hundreds of the nation's top players

For further information on partnership opportunities available contact:  
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