

# Edge Debate 54 – 20 February 2013

## A New Professionalism?

In 2011 the Edge debated 'What does it mean to be a building professional in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' (Debate 46, 15.9.11). The debate led to the development of a Special Issue of the journal *Building Research and Information* on New Professionalism, which has just been published. Copies will be available at the Debate and those attending will be given internet access. The issue is available for download at [www.tandfonline.com/r/bri-41-1](http://www.tandfonline.com/r/bri-41-1)

The debate will examine the dynamic relationship between professionals, government and markets; and whether professionals need to have a stronger role in protecting the public good – through leadership, acting impartially, and sharing knowledge and expertise. In particular, it will explore the actions that professional institutions could take.

The evening will be in two parts: 1) Introductory statements by some contributors to the Special Issue, including Edge members Bill Bordass, Frank Duffy & Stephen Hill, and 2) a "Question Time" discussion involving the audience and a panel of leaders from professional institutes.

Most of the papers in the Special Issue agree that the leadership role of building professionals has been eroded over recent decades, but that the world today is in great need of professional independence, judgement and responsibility for the public good. Can professionals and their institutions respond effectively to this challenge? Can they develop new ways of working, test them in practice, and build the knowledge and capacity to apply them at scale?

The authors have proposed a number of essential actions, including:

- Establishment of a shared identity and vision for practice and education
- Better procurement processes
- Increasing the available knowledge about building performance in use
- Considering the need for an independent 'Institute of Building Performance'

The debate will also consider some shared principles that all individual building professionals might adopt. A list that the Edge has been developing is reproduced on the reverse side.

**Speakers:** Dr Bill Bordass OBE, Usable Buildings Trust and a guest editor of the BRI special issue [*confirmed*]

Dr Frank Duffy CBE, Founder DEGW and Past President RIBA [*confirmed*]

Dr Kathryn Janda, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford [*confirmed*]

Stephen Hill, C<sub>2</sub>O Futureplanners [*confirmed*]

Professor Will Hughes, University of Reading [*confirmed*]

**Panelists:** Professor David Fisk, Imperial College and President CIBSE [*confirmed*]

Harry Rich, Chief Executive RIBA [*confirmed*]

Kenneth Creighton, Director of Professional Standards RICS [*confirmed*]

Michael Brown, Chief Deputy Director CIOB [*confirmed*]

Keith Clarke CBE, former CEO Atkins and former chairman CIC [*confirmed*]

The Edge is an inter-institutional ginger group involving CIBSE, ICE, RIBA, RICS and IStructE. It seeks to promote interdisciplinary co-operation between construction professionals. We seek to encourage change in the industry through intellectual debate, political lobbying and inter-institutional working.

Synopses of previous debates are recorded on our website [www.edgedebate.com](http://www.edgedebate.com)

**The debate is an invitation only event. If you would like to join us please contact Simon Foxell at [sf@architectspractice.com](mailto:sf@architectspractice.com) to confirm your place. Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come basis.**

**Venue:** The Building Centre  
Store Street, London WC1E 7BT

**Timing:** **20 FEBRUARY 2013**  
Debate 6.00 - 8.30 pm  
Drinks 8.30 - 9.00 pm

David Adams  
Willmott Dixon  
Construction  
Guy Battle  
dcarbon8, Deloitte  
Dr Bill Bordass  
Usable Buildings Trust  
Chris Beauman  
European Bank for  
Reconstruction and  
Development  
Caroline Cole  
Colander  
Dr Alison Cooke  
Cooke Associates  
Paddy Conaghan  
Hoare Lea  
Dr Frank Duffy PPRIBA  
Co-Founder DEGW  
Dr Garry Felgate  
Chop-Cloc Ltd  
Rachel Fisher  
Nation Housing Federation  
Prof Max Fordham  
PCIBSE  
Max Fordham LLP  
Andy Ford PCIBSE  
Mott MacDonald  
Simon Foxell  
The Architects Practice  
Bill Gething  
Sustainability +  
Architecture  
Jim Green  
Baylight Properties  
Prof Peter Guthrie  
University of Cambridge  
Dave Hampton  
The Carbon Coach  
Stephen Hill  
C<sub>2</sub>O futureplanners  
Mike Hitchens  
Pell Frischmann  
Dr Dorte Rich Jørgensen  
VP Heriot-Watt University  
Prof Paul Jowitt, PPICE  
Heriot-Watt University  
Janet Kidner  
Lend Lease  
Prof Doug King  
Francis Li  
Buro Happold  
Richard Lorch  
Building Research and  
Information  
Dr Mike Murray  
One Creative  
Environments Ltd  
Robin Nicholson  
Cullinan Studio  
Michael Pawlyn  
Exploration Architecture  
Adam Poole  
Buro Happold  
Dr Sunand Prasad  
PPRIBA  
Penoyre and Prasad LLP  
Lars Ostenfeld Riemann  
Ramboll  
Yasmin Shariff  
Dennis Sharp Architects  
Prof Richard Simmons  
University of Greenwich  
Simon Smith  
Smith and Wallwoek  
Lynne Sullivan  
sustainableBYdesign  
Chris Twinn  
Arup  
Prof Lorna Walker  
Lorna Walker Consulting  
Bill Watts  
Max Fordham LLP  
Elanor Warwick  
Kings College  
Jane Wernick  
Jane Wernick Associates  
Prof Mark Whitby PPICE  
Davies Maguire + Whitby  
Albert Williamson Taylor  
AKT II  
Jane Powell  
Debate Secretary

SUPPORTED BY  
Carbon Trust, CIBSE,  
ICE, RIBA  
RICS, IStructE

## Some elements of a new professionalism

These are a draft set of actions proposed by the Edge and reproduced in the editorial of the Special Issue. They are aimed at what the individual professional can do.

1. Be a steward of the community, its resources, and the planet. Take a broad view.
2. Do the right thing, beyond your obligation to whoever pays your fee.
3. Develop trusting relationships, with open and honest collaboration.
4. Bridge between design, project implementation, and use. Concentrate on the outcomes.
5. Don't walk away. Provide follow-through and aftercare.
6. Evaluate and reflect upon the performance in use of your work. Feed back the findings.
7. Learn from your actions and admit your mistakes. Share your understanding openly.
8. Bring together practice, industry, education, research and policymaking.
9. Challenge assumptions and standards. Be honest about what you don't know.
10. Understand contexts and constraints. Create lasting value. Keep options open for the future.

Institutions have a significant role in underpinning this, encouraging the appropriate conditions for adoption, and providing additional support through the creation and sharing of knowledge.