



University of the
Built Environment
EST. 1919

Honorary Community newsletter

Edition 11 | August 2025



Welcome to University of the Built Environment's latest update to our Honorary Awards community – the institution's Honorary and Associate Fellows, Honorary Degree recipients, Property Award winners and current/former Trustees – our community of loyal and supportive friends. This is a special edition, our first as University of the Built Environment, and celebrates this wonderful time in our institution's history. We will return to business as usual in the winter edition. As ever, we welcome your feedback and comments so we can continue to evolve the newsletter and better support the community. Thank you for your ongoing championing of this amazing institution! We look forward to seeing you all again in the very near future!



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University of the Built Environment – Special Edition



2025 has been a momentous year for the institution. On 9 June we formally launched as University of the Built Environment. This celebratory edition will look at our journey to this milestone and share highlights from the launch events. We look forward to continuing the celebrations with our colleagues and partners locally in Hong Kong on 22 October 2025.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us on this incredible journey – you have encouraged, inspired, supported and motivated us as an institution and we are thrilled to share this exciting new chapter with you all. Our new name now reflects who we are today and what we aim to become: an innovative, specialist university at the heart of built environment education. Together, we are University of the Built Environment.

The journey

The institution's vision to establish ourselves as the centre of excellence for built environment education was established in our centenary year, 2019, but the road to independence commenced long before this. After beginning life as the College of Estate Management with a bold remit to help rebuild Britain after the First World War, the College adapted, survived and thrived throughout the next one hundred years. In 2001, CEM launched its Virtual Learning Environment, providing students with programme materials electronically. This development foreshadowed the institution's transition to becoming a fully online education

provider, which in turn led to the first in a series of momentous decisions regarding CEM's future as an institution.

At a Board meeting in July 2010, at a time when the institution was struggling financially and was less than a quarter of its current size, the then Trustees made a brave decision to pursue full independence from the University of Reading, with all the risks and uncertainties that entails. The resolution it made was to firstly seek Taught Degree Awarding Powers, which were duly secured in 2012, making us only the sixth institution to receive such powers outside of the traditional universities who'd had them in perpetuity. In 2015 we then gained University College status – adding the 'U' to 'CEM'. Our taught degree awarding powers were renewed in 2017 and in 2023 we cemented our status as a registered university when our Taught Degree Awarding Powers were granted in perpetuity – a milestone that acted as the catalyst for our application to become University of the Built Environment.

Our Board of Trustees over the last two years have similarly dedicated enormous time and effort to devise and agree a new name and pass it successfully through the regulator. They wholeheartedly backed our statement of intent to lead, innovate and inspire across every aspect of the built environment as we deliver on our vision to become the centre of excellence for built environment education. As an institution, we remain grounded in our Royal Charter and



The Board of Trustees resolving in 2024 to apply to the Office for Students to become the University of the Built Environment

deeply connected to our history. But with our new name, we look ahead, committed to shaping the future of the built environment by providing education programmes to meet the needs of the whole sector, including surveying, real estate, construction, sustainability, planning, building control and architecture.



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Launching the new name

University of the Built Environment formally launched on 9 June 2025 following an intense period of effort and activity to rebrand. Central to the launch was **the reveal of our new logo** and website and the revamping of our office building, Horizons, in Reading.

The logo is rooted in history, designed for the future and genuinely reflective of the built environment. It has been extremely positively received and looks brilliant on the website, on letterheads, documents and the Horizons building itself!



The Barbican launch event

Over 250 members of our global community gathered at the Barbican Centre's garden conservatory on the incredibly hot evening of Thursday 19 June 2025 to celebrate the renaming of the institution to University of the Built Environment.

Key supporters from industry and education, alongside our staff, students, Trustees and Honorary Community members joined the Chair of the Board, Peter McCrea OBE, and Vice Chancellor, Ashley Wheaton HonRICS, HonFCABE, to raise a toast to the historic milestone in the evolution of the institution.

For those who missed the event, **a very special video was collated** to play to attendees featuring some of our supporters and partners. **A highlight**



Peter McCrea OBE, Chair of the Board, delivers his speech at the Barbican



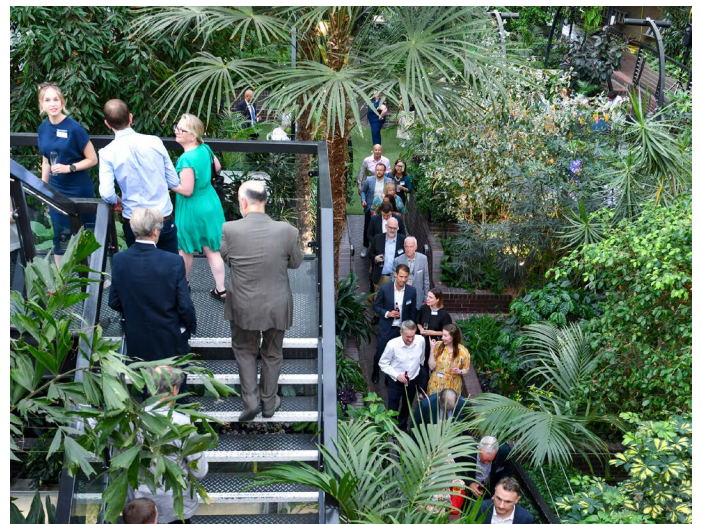
Ashley Wheaton HonRICS, HonFCABE, Vice Chancellor, delivers his speech to the guests at the Barbican



Jane Fawkes, Deputy Vice Chancellor and University Secretary, is congratulated for her leading role in securing the new name



Former Chair of the Board, Amanda Clack, celebrates with other University Trustees



Guests arrive at the Barbican launch event



University staff celebrate the new name at their summer barbecue at Shinfield Grange

Staff Summer Barbecue

We also held a special staff summer barbecue on 13 June 2025 at our Shinfield Grange site for more than 150 people on another baking hot summers day.

This was a wonderful opportunity to down tools and take a moment to reflect on what we have collectively achieved whilst enjoying plenty of sunshine, food, and merriment.

What our partners and community think

"Anyone who works with me knows I am a very proud alumni - I'm looking forward to watching, and being a part of, the continued growth of this wonderful University long into the future."

- Annabel Huffer, winner of the Alumni Award 2024

"A wonderful event and what an amazing achievement. Many congratulations to you and all the UBE team and of course a special mention to Jane Fawkes who has been key to every stage that finally culminated in last night's official launch! What a privilege it has been to have played a very tiny part in that long journey!"

- Adam Marks, Honorary Fellow and former Trustee

"A wonderful milestone - congratulations on the launch of the University of the Built Environment! A proud moment that reflects not just a name change, but a bold vision for the future of education and leadership in our sector."

- David Reynolds, Master, The Worshipful Company of Chartered Surveyors

"I absolutely love the university's new name, it really emulates what the university wants to be going forwards."

- Becky Rimmington, Associate Fellow

"Here's to the next 106 years and the new chapter as University of the Built Environment!"

- Dr Janet Young, Institute of Civil Engineers

"Huge congratulations to University of the Built Environment! Wishing you many centuries of success as you continue to champion excellence in built environment education."

- Dr Wei Yang OBE, Honorary Doctorate

"It was a pleasure to celebrate with you your impressive history and the tireless work you do to provide the real estate sector with the range of skills required. And, of course, congratulations to all on becoming University of the Built Environment."

- Susan Freeman, Honorary Doctorate

"Congratulations to Ashley and his team for the launch of University of the Built Environment in the (literally...) tropical setting of the Barbican Conservatory! It's only through sheer grit and determination that he has achieved this great feat - supported by an army of like minded folk over the last decade or so, which he thanked so warmly and generously in his speech."

- Nick McKeogh, New London Architecture

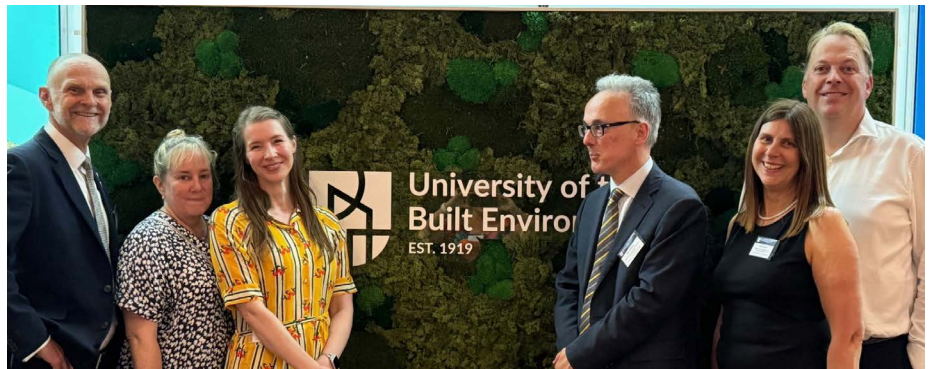
Meet the University's team

Jane Fawkes

Deputy Vice Chancellor and
University Secretary



In this special edition, focused on our launch as University of the Built Environment, we hear from Jane Fawkes, who has had a pivotal role in leading the work required to ensure the institution succeeded in becoming a full University this year.



Jane with her Executive Team colleagues at the launch of the University of the Built Environment at the Barbican in June 2025

What is your role at University of the Built Environment?

I am Deputy Vice Chancellor and University Secretary. This means I am responsible for governance at the University, and I have oversight for regulatory compliance, data, quality and legal services. As University Secretary to the Board of Trustees and its sub-committees, I provide guidance to Trustees on best practice in Corporate and Charity Governance, ensure the Boards and sub-committees fulfil their governance requirements, and manage the recruitment and induction of new trustees.

As University Secretary I am also responsible for the updating of University of the Built Environment's Charter, Bye-Laws and Regulations and I manage the institution's policies on risks and public benefit.

Finally, I also have oversight for the delivery of our Graduation ceremonies and our relationships with the institution's Honorary Community.

How long have you worked for the University

I always feel slightly embarrassed at this question – but I have worked here for 27 years, and it has been a privilege to contribute to the journey to University of the Built Environment throughout that entire time.

How did you come to be in this role and why did you join the institution?

I joined the then CEM leading undergraduate student services and was fortunate to have opportunities to develop including leading the development and training for the first true online programme

for CEM. I continued my passion for students and was appointed Director of Student Services in 2008, getting heavily involved in the initial application for taught degree awarding powers (TDAP). In 2016 I was honoured to be appointed as Deputy Vice Chancellor and University Secretary, especially knowing in whose footsteps I was following as University Secretary.

What is your favourite part of your job and what motivates you every day?

My favourite part is being involved in strategic projects that will bring positive impact to the University. I am motivated by a desire to make things better for our staff and students.

Meet the University's team



Jane in full ceremonial attire for her role at graduation, standing with new members of the Honorary Community - Patricia Brown and Jat Brinch

What is your greatest professional achievement at the University so far?

Am I allowed two? It would have to be us achieving University status - TDAP was the first step which started in 2010, but I have been directly discussing University status with the Department for Education and the OFS since 2017. To finally get there, and for the University to be fully recognised and given the status it deserves, is something I am extremely proud of.

I am also very proud of the way in which we marked our Centenary year - looking back now I do not know how we achieved the large number of external events in one year, of which the event at the Crystal was the highlight.

What do you find challenging about your work?

Balancing the different demands externally and internally whilst remaining calm can be hard sometimes!

What's one thing that has surprised you about working for the University?

It is constantly changing and evolving - every year has a new challenge - working for the University is never the same from one year to the next!

What's next for you/your team at University of the Built Environment?

To work with the Executive to build our profile and culture as a university, both internally and externally, with robust governance to keep us safe.

What three words sum up the University for you?

Care, ambition and passion.

Tell us a surprising or fun fact about you!

I have a 'thing' for pebbles/stones, if you came to my house, you would find pebbles scattered in various places - all carefully selected from various places I have visited!

The University Online

Catch up on these key stories and events if you missed them



Graduation – July 2025

Catch up on the latest from Graduation in July 2025

[Read the graduation news story >](#)



Strategic merger with the London School of Architecture

Another major strategic activity taking place at the institution during summer 2025

[Read the LSA merger news story >](#)

[Find out about the LSA summer show >](#)



Construction Skills Mission Board

The University is proudly supporting this new central government initiative

[Read the Construction Skills Mission Board news story >](#)

For other news articles from the University, see [whats-happening/news](#)

For other interesting and thought provoking articles on built environment themes, such as climate change and the future of architecture, see our content corner at [Articles – University of the Built Environment\(ube.ac.uk\)](#).

Honorary Community Luncheon – May 2025

We held the annual Honorary Community luncheon on Thursday 2nd May 2025 at Ironmongers Hall in central London. This was an occasion where some 50 members of the community – Trustees, friends of the University, Honorary and Associate Fellows and Honorary Doctorate recipients – came together as supporters of the University.

They heard an institutional update from the Chair, Peter McCrea OBE, and Vice Chancellor, Ashley Wheaton HonRICS, HonFCABE before we were able to formally award Associate Fellowships to seven

of the newest members of our community. Guests enjoyed a drinks reception in the outdoor courtyard followed by a three-course lunch.

It was Peter McCrea's first such occasion as Chair and he commented,

"I'm thrilled to present these seven highly deserving recipients with their Associate Fellowship certificates. They are all very worthy candidates, and I look forward to their long and fruitful association with the University in the years to come."



Seven new Associate Fellows – Jason Ratcliffe, Sadaqat Hussain, Becky Rimmington, Christopher Cheung, Andras Belan, Ashish Sharma and Nella Pang – with Ashley Wheaton HonRICS, HonFCABE, Peter McCrea OBE, Professor Nick Braisby and Jane Fawkes, the University's Board leadership team.



Honorary Community members enjoying the drinks reception

The Honorary Awards Community

It is important to University of the Built Environment to grow the community of Honorary Award recipients and help you get to know each other better, so every edition we learn more about two members from the Honorary Awards Community. In this edition we meet James Offen, who was a previous Chair of the institution back when it was CEM yet remains one of its most ardent supporters, and Becky Rimmington, one of UBE's newest Associate Fellows and one of the first two Apprentices we ever appointed to our Board back in 2021. We asked them both some questions to help us get to know them and learn more about their connection to the University.



James Offen

How were you connected to University of the Built Environment?

I was a postal course student of CEM in the 1950s. In 1978 I became one of the RICS representatives on the Board of the College, and I was chairman from 1985 to 1990. I was elected as an Honorary Fellow in 2002.

What are you doing now?

Being long since retired I am able to do a variety of things, including being a volunteer helper at Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford, and trying to write a biography of Sir Herbert Baker, an architect about whom I am very interested.



James (second from the left) attending the special Centenary Lucheon held for all past Chairs, Principals, Honorary Treasurers and College Secretaries of the then UCEM – James' friends Peter Goodacre and Peter Galloway both feature in the photo.

What's the biggest challenge you faced in your career?

To balance the time spent working for clients with that devoted to work for the RICS and CEM. A challenge that I failed!

What is your greatest professional achievement?

To become chairman for six years

of the RICS Education Committee and later the Institution's Honorary Treasurer, as well as the offices I held at CEM.

What is your best memory of the University?

I have been extremely fortunate to have many happy memories which include visiting Hong Kong with Peter Huntsman to present certificates to

The Honorary Awards Community

CEM's first cohort of students there; again with Peter meeting HM the late Queen when she visited the joint CEM /Strutt & Parker stand at the Game Fair; helping to secure the Presidency and subsequently the Patronage, of the Prince of Wales (now HM King Charles III); acquisition of Shinfield Grange; and life-long friendships with Peter Goodacre, and Peter Galloway, as well as members of the Board.

What three words sum up University of the Built Environment for you?

Efficient, Innovative, Indispensable

If you could have done any other job for just one day, what would it have been?

Cricket correspondent for The Times!

If you could meet anyone in the world, dead or alive who would it be and why?

Nelson Mandela, who was not only wise but, above all, forgiving.

What is the first thing you would buy if you won the lottery?

A Maserati Grecale Folgore!



Becky Rimmington

How were you connected to University of the Built Environment?

I've been connected to the University now for nearly 10 years! I initially studied an MSc in Real Estate between 2016 and 2018, when I was working as a retail estates surveyor. After graduating, I then became one of the first two Board Apprentices in 2021, serving a two-year term. I most recently was awarded an Associate Fellowship, and hope my connection to the institution continues for many more years to come.

What are you doing now?

I'm currently Head of Portfolio Management at Entain, managing the lease portfolio for the Group's occupied global office estate. It is an incredibly diverse estate, as we have offices in more than 30 countries around the world, so I am always being challenged to learn more about a specific property legal system, or to negotiate in a new language which I really love!

What's the biggest challenge you faced in your career?

It took me a bit of time to find surveying and my place in the

built environment. After school I embarked on studying architecture, which I had dreamed of doing since I was a child. My family are all in teaching, so unlike many property professionals I didn't know anyone in the industry, and I realised midway through that architecture didn't give me a spark in the way I thought it would. I completed my BSc, and instead of continuing my studies like many of my cohort, joined a business graduate scheme. A year in, I saw a retail acquisition role when scrolling LinkedIn and thought, "I could do that!". I applied, was successful, and thankfully my love of property was reignited.

I did however suffer quite severely with imposter syndrome in the first few years of my career in surveying. As a result, I was always trying (probably a bit too hard!) to do and be everything.

What is your greatest professional achievement?

I've been lucky to be involved in some fantastic projects during my career, but from a technical perspective it has to be acquiring c 250,000 sqft in Hyderabad for our new India office. Supporting the business to acquire such a large space, and consolidate two existing offices into one new state of the art space was really exciting.

Of course, it also came with its challenges, as I quickly had to learn the leasing process and laws to facilitate the acquisition, and disposal of our existing spaces. I was privileged to attend the grand opening to colleagues at the end of June, and loved seeing colleagues working in, and enjoying their new space.

The Honorary Awards Community

What is your best memory of the University?

I have lots of brilliant memories, but graduation will always stick in my mind. It was so lovely to finally meet friends in person that I had spent many a late-night chatting to on WhatsApp, and spend the day celebrating our successes both together and with our families.

What three words sum up University of the Built Environment for you?

Committee, sustainable, community

If you could have done any other job for just one day, what would it have been?

I'd love to be a professional athlete (of any sport!) just for a day. I competed internationally in allstar cheerleading for 10+ years alongside studying and work (if you've seen Netflix's CHEER it's the same, but clubs competing rather than colleges), and love to watch and play all and any sport. There's just something about that endorphin rush!

If you could meet anyone in the world, dead or alive who would it be and why?

Can I cheat and say me in 50 years time? I'd love to be able to gain insights from my future self about what I should worry about more, and what I shouldn't waste my time on, both professionally and personally.

What is the first thing you would buy if you won the lottery?

This is an easy one - land to build a house on! I've always loved the idea of building my own house, and many know I'm as interiors obsessed as I am property obsessed, so I'd be straight on the road to find and acquire the perfect site to make that dream come true!



Becky receiving her Associate Fellowship in May 2025



Becky with her fellow Board Apprentices, Lucy Gaitskell (2023-2025), Laura Bell McMillan (2021-2023), Chrystal Augustine (2023-2025)

Forthcoming occasions and events



Built Environment Award luncheon 2025 (formerly Property Award luncheon)

Thursday 9 October 2025

The Institute of Directors in Central London

Please note that there are very limited spaces remaining.

[Email us to register for the event >](#)



University of the Built Environment launch event in Hong Kong

Wednesday 22 October 2025

Hong Kong



Winter Graduation ceremonies

Thursday 29 and Friday 30 January 2026

Town Hall, Reading

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If you have any suggestions for the Honorary Community newsletter, or would like to contribute, please email Lyndsay Hughes at l.hughes@ube.ac.uk.