



University of the  
Built Environment  
EST. 1919

# Honorary Community newsletter

Edition 13 | April 2026



Welcome to University of the Built Environment's latest update to our Honorary Community – the institution's Honorary and Associate Fellows, Honorary Degree recipients, Built Environment Award winners and current/former Trustees – our community of loyal and supportive friends. This edition brings you up to speed on all things University of the Built Environment this Spring and the major milestones we are working on this year. 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 support of the institution! We look forward to seeing you at our Community events later this year.



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# University of the Built Environment update



There never seems to be a dull moment at the University and as ever it's been a busy start to the year with some hugely significant work being undertaken. Some of the key highlights include:

## Ofsted inspection

Our provision of apprenticeship programmes was inspected by Ofsted under their new inspection framework from 17–20 March 2026. It was a demanding week for all our staff. The new inspection framework requires a 'secure fit', which means that as a provider we must meet all of the specific standards and requirements within the grade, without exception. This is a more rigorous approach than the previous 'best fit' methodology of our last inspection in 2021. We do not yet have the official outcome report, and it will be published on the Ofsted website within the next few weeks, however, we are confident that we showcased our provision in the best possible light in order to meet expectations of us and to prove that we are doing everything we should be for our apprentices, in a consistently good manner.

We believe the inspectors saw the consistent quality of our apprenticeship delivery and the work we do to support apprentices to learn, progress and succeed. Our strength of approach, including clarity of curriculum, comprehensive support services and our work with employers were highlighted to demonstrate that our provision is of a high standard across all areas. The [report from the inspection](#) will be published in the coming weeks.

We want to take this opportunity to praise all our staff for their incredible hard work across our apprenticeship provision, be it leading us through the inspection itself, providing evidence to underpin the inspection or in simply delivering to this high standard every day in their work. We have an exceptional team who, regardless of the final outcome, demonstrated our institutional values with professionalism, commitment and are a credit to the institution and the students we serve.



The team who led us through our inspection – Ashley and Jane with Wendy Finlay, Mike Speight, Kate Deakin and Stephen Bartle

## Accreditations

The University has secured some important reaccreditations in early 2026. This includes the reaccreditation of all our programmes by the Chartered Institute of Building from January 2026 until January 2031, with one wholly new accreditation in this for our BSc (Hons) Architectural Design Technology. This provides us with CIOB

Accredited Centre Status and demonstrates the relevance of our programmes in meeting the CIOB Education Framework and the needs of industry and employers. In their commendations, the Panel commented that employer engagement is excellent, that the quality of our Virtual Learning Environment and its embedded, wrap-around student support are of a high standard, and that students speak very positively about their learning experiences with us. This follows hot on the heels of the successful CABE re-accreditation of our programmes secured in summer 2025 and the validation of another new programme and apprenticeship for launch later this year – Building Services Engineering.

### Institutional update

In other news:

■ We maintained our Matrix Standard accreditation for another year – this is the Department for Education’s standard for ensuring the delivery of high-quality information, advice and guidance to students. The assessor commended the continued progress being made by the institution, especially against the backdrop of 2025 being a year of such significant change for our staff and students.

■ We continue to grow our CPD offering to the sector through our Online Academy and have recently launched two new professional short courses in Using AI in Architectural Design and Using AI in Quantity Surveying. These courses form part of our artificial intelligence learning offer and reflect an ongoing commitment to helping built environment professionals use AI appropriately,

effectively and safely in line with industry standards.

■ In January, the University appointed its first ever Professors and Associate Professors, promotions awarded under our newly established Academic Career Framework following our achievement of full University status in June 2025. We appointed four Professors, one Visiting Professor and eight Associate Professors whose [profiles can be reviewed here](#). The appointments highlight the depth of expertise we now have in place across the institution and span programme leadership, pedagogic impact, professional practice and applied research. They reflect sustained dedication and excellence, and we congratulate all those awarded.

■ The University made two exciting new appointments through late 2025 to help us drive forward our vision and strategy to be the Centre of Excellence for Built Environment Education. Professor Lee Ivett, the critically acclaimed architect and academic, was appointed as the new Head of School at the London School of Architecture. Lee will play a key role in integrating the LSA into the University and growing a forward-looking, inclusive model of education for the future. We also appointed Professor Nick Mount as Pro Vice Chancellor Digital Campus. Nick is working to enable excellent end-to-end learner experiences through our digital campus and to support online students in the best possible way.



Professor Lee Ivett



Professor Nick Mount



The Board of Trustees and Executive Team at our Horizons building in September 2025

### Changes to the University Board of Trustees

We continue to be led by Ros Kerslake CBE in the role of Chair of the Board, supported by Prof. Michelle Jones as Vice Chair. We are now recruiting for these roles who can take the University forward – potential candidates can find out more and apply here.

We have experienced further changes on the Board of Trustees over the last three months and are also recruiting for new Independent Trustees, partly to prepare for some long-serving Trustees who will step down later this year. Potential candidates can find out more and apply by looking at [Peridot's website](#) in the coming days.

Once this important recruitment is concluded, we will be looking to re-appoint to our Board Apprentice Scheme. This follows the end of terms of appointment for Lucy Gaitskell and Chrystal Augustine who gained Board experience with us for two years. We will also be looking for a second Student Trustee to work alongside Adam Denton in this important role connecting the University's strategic leadership directly with the voice of its students.



Chrystal and Lucy at their final Board meeting in December 2025



### New members of our community in 2025

We are delighted to announce that the following people joined our Honorary Community in the last year, and we look forward to working with them more closely in the future and to seeing them at our upcoming events. Honorary Degrees were presented at our January Graduation Ceremonies. We congratulate them all and welcome them to our community!

Later in 2026, we will be presenting to two new Associate Fellows at the Community Luncheon event on 6 May and to five new Honorary Fellows at Graduation in the summer. Look out for details in the next newsletter.

Name	Award
Andras Belan	Associate Fellow
Sue Brown	Honorary MBA
Christopher Cheung	Associate Fellow
Peter Freeman CBE	Honorary Doctorate
Sarah Hayford	Winner - Alumni Award
Sadaqat Hussain	Associate Fellow
Andrew Keung	Honorary Fellow
Dick Kwok	Honorary Fellow
Samantha McClary	Winner - Built Environment Award
Laura Bell McMillan	Associate Fellow
William Norton	Winner - Academic Excellence Award
Rebekah Rimington	Associate Fellow
Nick Searl	Honorary Doctorate
Ashish Sharma	Associate Fellow
Jason Ratcliffe	Associate Fellow
Patrick Tong	Associate Fellow
Marcelino Wong	Associate Fellow
Dr Janet Young CBE	Honorary Doctorate

Don't forget, members of the Honorary Community are now entitled to identify their roles in formal correspondence through the use of designated post-nominals in their signatures. These are intended to provide clarity, consistency, and due acknowledgement of the awards made to you and which you undertake for our institution and can be used as follows:

- Honorary Fellow – Hon FUBE
- Associate Fellow – Hon AFUBE
- Honorary Doctorate – Hon DSc
- Honorary MBA – Hon MBA

Please do keep us up to date with any changes in contact information by emailing [I.hughes@ube.ac.uk](mailto:I.hughes@ube.ac.uk)



Dr Janet Young (top) and Peter Freeman CBE (bottom) receiving their honorary degrees at graduation in Jan 2026



Patrick Tong receiving his Associate Fellowship from our COO David Balme in Hong Kong in March 2026

# Meet the University team



Lisa heads up the Human Resources Team here at University of the Built Environment, which includes HR, Payroll and Facilities Management. The teams are responsible for looking after all our people and property-related matters in the UK and in Hong Kong.

## What is your role at University of the Built Environment?

I lead the teams who manage the full employment lifecycle for our UK and Hong Kong staff group, which is about 550 people in total right now. This includes the HR, Payroll, and Facilities Management teams and covers both our UK (Reading and London) and Hong Kong operations.

## How long have you worked for the University?

A long time! Let's just say I arrived when we were CEM and I've had the privilege of seeing our journey to UCEM, and now to University of the Built Environment.

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

I remember being excited by the challenge of setting up the HR function from scratch and being the person to establish it as a trusted business partner and grow it, alongside the evolution of the University.

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

There is never, ever a dull moment in my work world and every day brings new challenges and opportunities. I am surrounded by a fantastic team who care deeply about what they do for the University, and we have so much we want to achieve!

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

This is hard to answer when there's been so many years of activity. Perhaps the way to describe this is to say it has been an achievement to lay the people foundations and structure – and continually improve and enhance it over the years – to help facilitate the position we have reached today. Being able to do this with institutional support and encouragement, has been rewarding.

## What do you find challenging about your work?

The world of work is full of complex agendas, issues, and problems. Mix this with 550 individuals who arrive at work each day with their own life hopes and challenges. Navigating through all this to ensure we achieve successful

outcomes for our students is the challenge, but we do it. Every. Single. Day.

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

If I am honest, I never saw myself being here this long. What I didn't know was how capable the organisation would be at transforming itself into the next bigger and better thing. So, I am surprised how long I have stayed but it's like I have worked for three different universities!

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

We are in year one of our five-year people strategy and lots of activities are underway. There is so much work we know we can do on the people side to help the University grow and prosper, and this is our focus for the next period.

## What three words sum up the University for you?

Ambitious, Never-wavering, Determined

## Tell us a surprising or fun fact about you!

My fridge is covered in magnets in the shape of a map of my travels around Spain, I have genuinely visited more cities in Spain than I have in the UK!

# The University Online

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



## Graduation – January 2026

Our winter graduation ceremonies took place in late January in which over 350 students received their certificates. We were joined by four outstanding sector key note speakers across the ceremonies, Liz Peace CBE, Justin Young, Nick McKeogh and Sam McClary.

[Read the graduation news story >](#)



## Built Environment Apprenticeship Awards – February 2026

The fifth annual event took place in February.

[Read about the 2026 Apprenticeship Awards >](#)



## University of the Built Environment's BE Sustainable Podcast

Now up to episode 20, catch up on the latest releases.

[Listen to the podcast >](#)

## Built Environment Futures Assembly



The University launched its new forum the Built Environment Futures Assembly back in the autumn and held its first roundtable and inaugural Strategic Advisory Board in January.

[Find out more about BEFA >](#)

Discover other [news articles](#) from the University or read our [interesting and thought-provoking articles](#) on built environment themes, such as climate change and the future of architecture.

# Getting to know the Honorary 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 individual members of the Honorary Community. In this edition we meet Christopher Cheung, one of our newest Associate Fellows and Sir James Wates CBE, who was previously a Trustee of the then UCEM from 2012 to 2018, won the Property Award in 2019 and was made an Honorary Fellow in 2020. We asked them some questions to help us get to know them and learn more about their connections with the University.



**Sr Christopher Cheung** BSc  
(Hons) BBA (Hons) MRICS MHKIS RPS (GP)  
- Associate Fellow

## How were you connected to University of the Built Environment?

My connection with the University of the Built Environment dates back to 2010. I had recently completed my first degree in the UK and, after returning to Hong Kong and starting my career, I became increasingly fascinated by the real estate sector and its role in society. Motivated by a desire to pursue a professional career as a surveyor, I began exploring further study opportunities in real estate and came across the institution through my research (at that time it was the College of Estate Management under the University

of Reading). I subsequently enrolled on the Estate Management degree programme, which marked the beginning of my long-standing relationship with the University.

## What are you doing now?

Since working for a number of multinational consultancy firms over the years, primarily in valuation and advisory roles, I have in recent years taken on roles in boutique professional firms. I am currently responsible for the valuation department and oversee a variety of valuation and advisory projects. This stage of my career allows me to continue developing my professional practice while drawing on the experience gained in my earlier roles.

## What's the biggest challenge you've faced in your career to date?

In the years following COVID, operating in the commercial real estate sector has been particularly

challenging, with subdued market recovery, downward pressure on asset values and increasing cost sensitivities among clients. Navigating these conditions with tighter resources has required careful judgement to balance client expectations with professional standards, especially in valuation work, and has been a significant test of resilience and professionalism in my career.

## What is your greatest professional achievement to date?

Rather than a single milestone, I consider my greatest professional achievement to be the breadth and depth of experience I have gained across different surveying consultancies. I have been very lucky to have the opportunity to work in several international firms, as well as reputable local and boutique practices in Hong Kong, which has exposed me to a wide range

# The Honorary Community

of clients, market segments and ways of working. These experiences have broadened my perspective on valuation, strengthened my commercial awareness and enabled me to develop into a more well-rounded professional.

## What is your best memory of the University?

Definitely the people and the sense of community. In my first couple of years of study, the community felt quite small and I was, in many ways, on my own. That changed when I attended a Hong Kong event organised by the University, just as the local office began to grow. From then on, I was fortunate to meet many friendly, supportive and fun people, and the relationships and experiences built through that community are among my happiest memories with the University.

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

Inclusive, Professional, Fun.

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

A Wall Street trader.

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

Bruce Lee. He was such a uniquely talented and well rounded person, and I would love to hear, in his own words, how he thought about discipline, mindset and life, and how he pushed himself to reach that level across so many different areas.

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

I have been a lover and collector of Chinese art and antiques for many years. If I won the lottery, the first thing I would do is purchase a piece of land and build a museum, designed in the style of traditional Chinese architecture (Tang-dynasty inspired, and done properly to a genuinely high standard) to display my collection for educational purposes.



Christopher at the Honorary Community Luncheon, Ironmongers Hall, London, in 2025

# The Honorary Community



How were you connected to University of the Built Environment?

I was a Trustee from 2012 until 2018

What are you doing now?

I am a Director of Wates Group, our family business, having served as Chairman from 2013-2023 before successfully handing over the reins to my cousin Tim Wates. Outside of Wates I am Chairman of the Rugby Football Union (RFU), Chairman of Vestey Holdings which is a family of businesses primarily investing in food companies operating in various segments of the industry and I am also Chairman of Tewke which is a prop-tech start-up in the "AI enabled home management through smart light switches" space.

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

Becoming the first Chairman of Wates of the 4th generation of owners, steering the Group through industry-wide economic headwinds and the pandemic, but achieving sustained financial profitability, and a strong pivot towards sustainability.

What is your greatest professional achievement?

See above! And now proud to say that we have several 5th generation Wates family employees, and we continue focusing on handing over to the next generation an even stronger, more sustainable business.

What is your best memory of the University?

Helping the transition from a College to a University and continuing to meet the many students that have graduated over the years, and following their successes with great interest.

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

Ashley, success and dedication!

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

Without a doubt to be Captain of the British and Irish Lions in a test against New Zealand!

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

My grandfather Sir Ronald Wates who remains my greatest inspiration

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

Whatever is on my wife's wish list!



Sir James (left) being presented with the Property Award in 2019 from the then Chair of the Board, John Gellaly (right).

# Forthcoming occasions and events

## Honorary Community Luncheon 2026

**6 May**

Founders Hall, London

**Final chance to register >**

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## Summer Graduation ceremonies

**2 and 3 July 2026**

Town Hall, Reading

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## Built Environment Award luncheon 2026

**Thursday 8 October 2026**

The Institute of Directors in Central London

Save the date now, invites to follow in early summer!

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If you have any suggestions for the Honorary Community newsletter, or would like to contribute, please email Lyndsay Hughes at

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