

MONITOR:ICE REVIEW

ICE review

A review of recent developments at the Institution of Civil Engineers by ICE president David Balmforth. For further information please contact the communications office on +44 20 7665 2107, email communications@ice.org.uk or visit www.ice.org.uk/news-public-affairs.

Promoting women in engineering

ICE celebrated the UK's 'National Women in Engineering Day' in June. We promoted the exciting and diverse prospects of careers in civil engineering to young women around the country through events, engagement with schools and social media activity.

Aimi Elias, London Underground project engineer and past ICE president's apprentice, featured in *The Independent* newspaper following a round-table discussion on changing gender stereotypes in the industry. ICE's leading female fellows were also showcased in the media to inspire young women and ICE regions held various supporting events.

Women represent 10% of ICE's total membership and female applications to ICE are slowly rising, with 18% of graduate members now women. This improvement is encouraging. ICE's under-19s engagement together with collaboration with other bodies has led to some excellent awareness-raising initiatives.

The fact remains, however, that there is still a disproportionate balance of male and female engineers and we must all do more to ensure that careers in civil engineering are equally accessible.



Nearly 20% of ICE graduate members are now women



Manchester, UK will be run by an elected mayor in 2017

Supporting infrastructure devolution

ICE believes that locating powers closer to those it affects can lead to greater focus and better decision making on infrastructure investment, and UK transport devolution formed a key recommendation in *ICE's manifesto for infrastructure* published earlier this year.

We are pleased to see the UK government is pushing ahead with its devolution plans, aided by the announcement of a cities and local government devolution bill in the Queen's speech in May. The bill will help kick-start the 'northern powerhouse' proposal – a vision that would see UK's northern cities given more power over local transport, housing and planning.

The legislation comes hand-in-hand with a new minister for the northern powerhouse proposal, James Wharton, who is expected to take the new bill through parliament, as well as the appointment of Jim O'Neill as commercial secretary to the Treasury. We look forward to working with them.

However, there is no 'one size fits all' devolution model. We will therefore continue to urge the government to resist the desire for standardisation and instead be guided by the needs, ambition and capacity of each area.

Celebrating Crossrail tunnel completion

The colossal Crossrail tunnelling project in London broke through to its final stop in May. After 3 years of non-stop digging by eight giant boring machines, the final metres of Crossrail's 42 km of train tunnels were cut out of the London Clay.

It is fantastic to see Crossrail reach this significant milestone. The project really is a true feat of engineering. Massive 1000 t machines, each 150 m long, have carved twin tunnels under London with the aim of improving the well-being of those in the capital, creating jobs and boosting the economy. To see the vision coming to life and showcasing our profession's capability is truly inspiring.

As well as the tunnelling, Crossrail's engineers have transported more than 4.5 Mt of clay spoil from London to Wallasea Island in Essex, where environmentalists are using the materials to build a new nature reserve for the RSPB nature conservation charity. The reserve will also encourage the formation of an artificial salt marsh, which will provide additional flood protection for the local area.



Prime Minister David Cameron celebrates the end of Crossrail's tunnelling