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FROM THE EDITOR

With ScaffEx this year moving to September after last year's November show, it feels like the excitement is building already, with the show at the end of the summer. Free registration for the Conference is now available, and tickets for the Awards will go on sale any day now – and the Awards are open for entries. ScaffEx24 in Belfast last year was a wonderful event and this year's event in Manchester will be several times bigger. Make sure you take advantage of hearing all the latest innovations, ideas and discussions at the Conference; see the leading suppliers and their latest products at the Exhibition; and celebrate the best of the best at the Awards; see page 16 for more information – and book now.

Speaking of the best of the best, we feature three outstanding NASC members in our cover story this month, looking at hanging scaffolds. Alltask spent three years with its partners designing and planning the scaffolding for the iconic Hungerford Bridge in central London. With the River Thames below and active Network Rail lines above, the structure presented a complex range of hazards — requiring safe clearances beneath, beside, and above the bridge at all times.

Palmers were tasked with creating a safe, business as usual, environment within Liverpool Street Station whilst enabling overhead cladding replacement works to the roof to be undertaken without interruption to the station. The brief was to provide a lightweight suspended protection platform to collect any materials that may become dislodged during the works. As with all railway stations constructed in the 19th century, suspending loads from the fabric of the building must be carefully considered to ensure elements of the building fabric framework are not overloaded.

Finally, Sky Scaffolding Midlands' work on Castle Bridge, a historic Grade II* listed structure dating back to 1793, had to overcome the restriction on encroaching into the road, as the bridge forms a critical traffic route. This meant erecting a hanging scaffold with only 1.8m of available width for the support scaffold. Find out how they did it, and read details on all three brilliant projects, on pages 9–12.

Elsewhere, we have a feature that brings you up to date on all things CISRS Cards on page 8, and on page 14 is a feature that looks at how NASC is approaching Government and what changes it is lobbying for to improve the industry and the lives of those who work in it. All eyes may, understandably, appear to be cast across the Atlantic at the moment to see what President Trump does with tariffs this week, but behind the scenes in the UK, NASC continues to make scaffolding's case to those in power.

I hope you enjoy this issue.



Nick Campion
Editor

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UNIVERSAL PROMISE

Huge opportunities for construction and scaffolding companies appear destined to arrive in Bedfordshire over the next six years. Universal has announced that it is planning to create an attraction on the site of a former brickworks near Bedford and could create an estimated 28,000 jobs before opening in 2031. Universal estimates the 476-acre complex could attract 8.5 million visitors in its first year.

Sir Keir Starmer said the multibillion-pound investment by the company would “see Bedford home to one of the biggest entertainment parks in Europe, firmly putting the county on the global stage.”

Universal, which has made films including *Minions* and *Wicked*, has theme parks in Orlando and Los Angeles in the US, as well as in Japan, Singapore and China.

The site – which is the former Kempston Hardwick brickworks – will be ‘one of the largest and most advanced’ theme parks on the continent, the production company says. A full planning proposal will be submitted to the UK government, with construction expected to start in 2026.

Universal Destinations and Experience said 80% of those employed in the new jobs would be from Bedford, central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes.



PRISON PLANS LOCK IN NEW WORK



Construction firms can expect significant new work from the Government’s £2.3 billion prison expansion initiative, says construction data specialist Glenigan. The programme, which aims to create 14,000 new prison places by 2031, represents a substantial pipeline of secured projects for the construction industry.

Under the Ministry of Justice’s Prison Capacity Strategy, four new prisons will be built in the next seven years, with a goal to open up 6,500 places for offenders. Meanwhile, another 6,400 places will be built in new blocks on current prison sites. In addition, 1,000 places will be created in ‘rapid deployment cells’, and over 1,000 existing cells will be refurbished.

A further £500 million will be spent on building maintenance across prisons and the probation service.

To ensure work starts promptly, rules will be changed so that prisons are deemed ‘sites of national importance’, thus avoiding the planning delays which have plagued the delivery of new facilities in the past. More land for potential future prison sites is also to be acquired.

The extra investment will reinforce the already-improving prospects for new work in the sector. Glenigan data shows that the value of prison project starts surged to £164 million in the three months to January, an almost fourteen-fold rise compared to a year earlier and accounting for some 38% of all communities and amenities sector work in the period.

HISTORIC SCAFFOLDING FIRM IN ADMINISTRATION

A scaffolding and steeplejack firm that began life in the 19th century has called in administrators after being hit by a sharp drop in its pipeline of work and rising costs. Hertfordshire-based Rodells has appointed FRP Advisory to oversee its affairs and sell its assets, having already stopped trading due to cashflow issues.

The family-owned firm, which had been operating since 1898, also made all its 37 staff redundant prior to FRP’s appointment. Among its work, Rodells provided scaffolding at Wimbledon All England Tennis Club to allow access to the timber frame of the venue’s new hospitality suite. The firm’s work also included installing and maintaining lightning protection systems on commercial, historic and church buildings.



Sarah Cook, joint administrator and partner at FRP, said: “Rodells has a long-standing reputation in the Home Counties and London, with more than a century of history behind it.

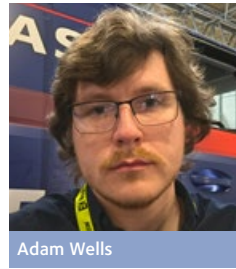
“Unfortunately, the business was no longer viable in the face of mounting financial pressures and a reduced pipeline of work.”

STAY MENTAL HEALTH AWARE

This year, Mental Health Awareness Week will take place from 12 to 18 May 2025, while April is Stress Awareness Month. Scaffolding companies have not always been the best in embracing the need to address mental health issues but scaffolders face unique stressors, including long hours, physically demanding work, harsh environments and sometimes extended time away from family. These pressures can lead to anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and, tragically, high suicide rates. Construction as a whole has one of the highest suicide rates of any industry – a statistic that underlines the urgent need for cultural change.

Ultimately, investing in mental health isn't just good ethics, it's good business. A mentally healthy workforce is more productive, engaged and resilient. It is also worth noting that no matter whether you're a small business or a large corporation, the law requires all employers to protect workers from work-related stress, depression and anxiety under the provision in sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Mental Health Awareness Week and Stress Awareness Month are good opportunities to refocus on these important issues. NASC's Adam Wells, Safety, Health & Technical Executive, recently attended a two-day Mental Health First Aider course provided by St John Ambulance. Adam comments: "The course was well delivered, combining



Adam Wells

teacher-led training on specific mental health subjects with group discussion and learning. This worked incredibly well to set us up with the knowledge required, as well as providing some real-life context for when and where these skills are needed, to get people the help they need.

"Having staff within NASC who are trained Mental Health First Aiders is another step forward in raising awareness within the scaffolding industry. It is important to keep driving this forward: mental health is just as important as physical health, and often one will have an effect on the other.

"Few of us know what to do if they, or someone they know, are experiencing a mental health condition, episode or crisis. There are many charities and organisations offering advice and resources – consider engaging with them and reaching out to your company's Mental Health First Aider. Talk to your colleagues, your friends and your family. Breaking down the barriers that surround communicating about mental health is so important to removing the stigma associated with it. Mental Health Awareness Week is your chance to make a change that could help someone you know in the years to come."

SUBCONTRACTORS' VAT FRAUD

Construction Enquirer is reporting that rogue payroll companies are targeting subcontractors in a VAT fraud which is now facing a clampdown by the tax authorities.

Construction firms are being approached by a new breed of 'labour masters' offering to take on their self-employed workers with inducements like cash kickbacks. They get paid, including VAT, by contractors for labour but delay payments

to HMRC before folding the business and disappearing with the VAT money.

Tax specialists said the scam is a straight VAT fraud and often used as a way for criminals to launder cash. HMRC inspectors are understood to be warning construction companies about getting embroiled in the scam.

NEST SEES 4,000 APPRENTICES FLY

The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) has helped more than 4,000 apprentices join the construction sector in 2024-25 through its New Entrant Support Team initiative. The team supported 4,128 apprenticeship starts over the financial year – up from 2,340 the year before.

CITB said it plans to double the size of its NEST

programme under the UK Government's skills package for the construction sector.

The training board will invest £32m of that sum to fund more than 40,000 annual industry placements for learners on Level 2 and Level 3 courses, including NVQs, BTECs, T Levels and advanced apprenticeships.

NEST was created to help employers with the recruitment and retention of new entrants, particularly apprentices, offering hands-on assistance and helping to address employment barriers.

It is one of several government-backed CITB initiatives announced recently. In March, the training body committed £40m to create Homebuilding Skills Hubs to deliver fast-track apprenticeships. All of these schemes form part of CITB's wider Strategic Plan for 2025-29, which commits £550m to attracting new entrants to the construction sector.



UKCW JUST AROUND THE CORNER

UK Construction Week London runs 7-9 May 2025 at London's ExCeL. The event, designed to cater for the whole construction supply chain, is back again with both its Birmingham show (in September) and London show, both of which run alongside The Stone Show & Hard Surfaces, Onsite On Hire, and The Offsite Show.



With leading construction products, all of the major construction professional bodies, international pavilions, industry and government leaders, and plenty of entertainment over three days, this is the must-attend event for construction professionals from all over the UK and beyond.

There is an impressive list of exhibitors, full seminar programme, net zero trail, live product demonstrations, guest speakers, new products, networking events and much more. NASC will be exhibiting at UKCW after a successful Birmingham show last year, and would be pleased to welcome members and non-members alike to its van.

Find out more and register here <https://www.ukconstructionweek.com/>

SAFETY EVENT SUCCESS

The Health & Safety Event, which ran in Birmingham on 8-10 April, has reported a successful, sold-out show that solidifies its position as Europe's leading event for the safety and security of people, places, and assets.

The NEC was alive with energy as a vibrant crowd of attendees filled the halls, connecting with industry leaders and exploring cutting-edge innovations in safety and security solutions.

With its deep commitment to safety, it made sense for NASC to exhibit at the event, where representatives had important and constructive conversations with stakeholders from across industries and sectors.



NO FALLS WEEK

The No Falls Foundation is holding its annual No Falls Week from 12 to 16 May to promote safe working at height.

Following the success of their inaugural campaign last year, which saw almost 2,000 organisations sign up to take part, No Falls Week returns to raise awareness about the importance of safe working at height, preventing falls, and ensuring everyone that works at height comes down safely. It is estimated over one million businesses, and 10 million workers, carry out work involving some form of working at height every year. No Falls Week provides the opportunity for organisations across all sectors to place a focus on work at height safety.

Falls from height are consistently the leading cause of workplace fatalities in the UK, with 50 people losing their lives at work due to a fall from height in 2023/2024. Latest figures from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) show that falls from height were responsible for 36% of all workplace deaths last year, up from 30% the year before (and 25% the year before that).

Employers can sign up to get involved in the week-long campaign via the No Falls Week website, where there are a host of toolkits and resources from members of the Access Industry Forum (AIF) to help organisations plan activities during No Falls Week. For further information and to sign up for No Falls Week, visit: <https://nofallweek.org/get-involved/>

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hundred year wait

Local authorities in England with the most severe shortage of social housing now have waiting lists exceeding a hundred years for a family sized social home. The findings are from new analysis released by the National Housing Federation (NHF), Crisis and Shelter, who have come together to warn of the critical need to boost investment in social housing at the upcoming Spending Review to end homelessness and tackle the country's rapidly worsening housing crisis.

Mace wins overhaul

JP Morgan Asset Management has signed off a deal with Mace to deliver one of the largest building reuse projects in the City of London.



The project to overhaul 65 Gresham Street, adding four extra lightweight rooftop floors, comes after a major pre-let deal this week with a city investment firm to take all 400,000 sq ft of space. The £200m-plus building overhaul will see the building raised in height to 12 storeys, with external terraces and inset balconies providing outdoor space on every floor.

Prioritising a reuse first approach, the project will retain more than 70% of the existing building's structure, with 95% of materials recycled or reused on-site, targeting a 66% reduction in whole-life carbon. Fossil fuel free during construction and operation, the building will incorporate air source heat pumps for heating, cooling and hot water generation.

Wates for Middlesbrough

Plans to transform a derelict site in Middlesbrough town centre have cleared a major hurdle after securing planning approval. Wates has been named lead contractor for the £200m development, which is part of the wider Middlesbrough masterplan, with the first phase including more than 240 build-to-rent flats and residential accommodation for more than 450 students.

Bauma a big hit

Show organiser Messe München has hailed a successful Bauma 2025 with attendance of around 600,000 visitors from more than 200 countries.



PICTURE CREDIT: Messe München

The event was held during a week dominated by talk of trade tariffs, but exhibitors and industry leaders reported a positive atmosphere and said the show could provide a real stimulus to the equipment industry. The next Bauma will be held from 3 to 9 April 2028.

Construction output returns to growth

Construction output recorded growth of 0.4% according to Government figures, with modest increases in both new work and repair and maintenance, with public new work leading growth while private housing and industrial pulled the number down.

There are fears that the rising economic uncertainty caused by President Trump's tariffs will cause further downward pressure on a weak market as nervous property investors put the brakes on planned schemes. Contractors may also face higher prices when sourcing materials but again, there is much uncertainty.



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IMPORTANT CHANGES TO CISRS CARDS



Paul Napper

There are some important changes regarding CISRS (Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme) cards that will affect all those involved in the scaffolding industry this year. Scaffolding Insider asked Paul Napper, Head of Training and Education at NASC, to explain. Paul writes:

New Scaffolder Card Design

2025 sees a new design for the CISRS Scaffolder card. This change has been prompted by discussions with employers who expressed the need for a clearer visual representation of an operative's experience level. As a result, the updated card design will feature a 'First Issue' date, which will indicate the cardholder's initial date of issue for their Scaffolder card.

This new addition has been in practice since 9 January 2025. By including this key piece of information, the CISRS card will provide a quick visual reference for employers to assess an operative's experience. The First Issue date will offer greater clarity about how long an operative has been certified, which can be invaluable in assessing competency and experience on site.

The inclusion of the First Issue date is the first significant change to the card's design in many years and is aligned with CISRS's commitment to supporting employers and scaffolding operatives by providing clear and reliable information.

The CISRS Digital Card

In addition, scaffolders will soon have their CISRS cards on a dedicated app – expected in early 2026. This will allow cardholders to store their CISRS cards on their smartphones. The app will provide instant access to qualifications, training records and certifications, making the training process easier for cardholders, managers and training providers.

Changes to Pricing

CISRS has worked hard to maintain stable pricing for its scaffolder cards, having last adjusted prices in April 2023. However, after a recent review, the CISRS team has made the difficult decision to implement a small price increase in 2025 due to ongoing inflationary pressures. This decision has not been taken lightly, as CISRS strives to keep card pricing affordable while ensuring the continued high-quality production and distribution of the cards that are essential to the scaffolding industry. However, with inflationary pressures affecting every part of both everyone's working and personal lives, this small adjustment was necessary.

It's important to note that, despite the challenging economic conditions, CISRS has worked closely with all its suppliers to minimise the impact of these price increases.



As part of a collaborative effort with NOCN Group, CISRS has succeeded in keeping the rise in costs to a minimum, especially when compared to other card schemes, which have seen price hikes much earlier than CISRS. As a non-profit organisation, CISRS ensures that costs are kept to a minimum.

The new pricing structure came into effect in two stages:
From 1 January 2025: CISRS cards have been priced at £36.
From 1 April 2025: CISRS cards have been priced at £38.

These changes reflect the ongoing efforts to ensure the sustainability of the card production process and the continued availability of high-quality training resources. CISRS is fully committed to maintaining its excellent value proposition and these changes are necessary to safeguard the long-term future of the scheme and its services to the industry.

The Future of CISRS

CISRS remains steadfast in its commitment to providing industry-leading certification and training for scaffolders across the UK. These changes to card pricing and design are part of the ongoing evolution of the scheme, which continues to adapt to the needs of the industry and the challenges of an ever-changing economic landscape. While price increases can be difficult, they are a necessary part of maintaining the sustainability of the CISRS scheme and ensuring that it remains the gold standard for scaffolding certification.

We understand that these changes may require adjustments, and CISRS is here to support both employers and operatives throughout this transition. For more detailed information about the upcoming changes, and to ensure you are up to date with all the latest developments, please visit the CISRS website <https://cisrs.org.uk/>



SPOTLIGHT ON: HANGING SCAFFOLDS

Hanging scaffolds, also known as cantilevered or complex overhead scaffolds, which are used when traditional ground-supported scaffolding is impractical or impossible, present scaffolding contractors with unique technical and operational challenges. Always visually impressive, a huge amount of work goes into making them successful and safe. Here, we find out about exactly how three such structures were erected by NASC members.

Alltask: Hungerford Bridge

After three years of design and planning alongside partners Prime Scaffold and Structural Designs Limited, Alltask has begun scaffolding works for its client VolkerFitzpatrick Ltd on the iconic Hungerford Bridge in central London.



This 161-year-old railway bridge, a vital connection to Charing Cross Station, is now undergoing essential restoration to preserve its structure and extend its service life.

Scope Overview

Hungerford Bridge is a six-span structure that carries five electrified railway lines across the River Thames, right in the heart of the capital. The bridge comprises four main steel lattice girders (designated A, B, D, and E), three sub-decks, and supporting elements including cross girders, rail bearers, and bracing. The red brick abutments and piers provide a striking contrast to the steel superstructure. While most of the intermediate supports are steel, the Surrey Pier between spans 4 and 5 — along with the Middlesex Pier — is built from red brick and forms part of structure 7C. On approach, the bridge connects to a brick viaduct from the south and

three metal deck spans at the northern 'Fan End', framed on either side by the Golden Jubilee footbridges.

The project includes comprehensive steel strengthening, abrasive blasting, and repainting of the main longitudinal girders that span the River Thames.

The restoration also involves steelwork cleaning and repainting, removal of fractured decorative cast-iron collars, brickwork and cast-iron column repairs, and the replacement of failed truss pin end caps with new aluminium designs. Access is also being provided to allow inspection and maintenance of connection pins attaching the cross girders to the main trusses, and brickwork repairs will also take place.

To support these works, Alltask is delivering the access solutions — including the design and erection of scaffolding across the structure. The scaffolding design has been developed in close collaboration with Prime Scaffold and Structural Designs Limited to ensure safe, efficient delivery across all phases of the restoration.

Access Design and Engineering Collaboration

The design scope for the scaffolding was to provide access to all bridge girders across each of the six spans. With the River Thames below and active Network Rail lines above, the

structure presented a complex range of hazards – requiring safe clearances beneath, beside, and above the bridge at all times.

Design constraints were shaped by strict Port of London Authority requirements, which required vertical clearance for uninterrupted river traffic. Simultaneously, the running Network Rail lines demanded minimum vertical and lateral clearance to ensure the continuous and safe passage of live trains.

Initial design proposals were developed by Prime Scaffold and Structural Designs Limited (PSD) and further refined in collaboration with the Southern Renewals Enterprise (SRE), Alltask, and Network Rail. The scaffold's structural principles were based on cantilever and bridge beam arrangements to support suspended working platforms. External access was achieved through cantilever drop scaffolds fixed to each outer girder, maintaining river and rail clearances while enabling safe working conditions.

For access to the underside of the bridge, continuous bridge beams between cross girders were used to suspend platforms below the longitudinal steelwork. To safeguard both railway and marine operations, regular interface reviews were conducted with Network Rail's signalling and track teams to ensure no disruption to either train operators from Charing Cross or to river traffic along the Thames.



Due to the unique characteristics of each span, scaffold phasing required individual designs. PSD completed over 30 detailed drawings, calculations, and clearance analyses to map out every span's interface requirements and plan works in advance. This rigorous approach enabled efficient execution and forward planning for subsequent restoration phases.

The design team from PSD worked closely with Alltask throughout, ensuring smooth progression from initial concept through to final construction status (AFC), supported by regular design review meetings that kept the project on schedule and within budget.

Progress and the future

Alltask is making great progress in the scaffolding works, with each section of the bridge presenting its own unique challenges and requiring careful coordination and expertise.

These recent images capture the scale and precision of the work being done. This is all down to dedicated teams at Alltask, design partners at Prime Scaffold and Structural Designs Limited, and client VolkerFitzpatrick Ltd, supported by Livett's and the Southern Renewals Enterprise — a collaborative delivery model led by Network Rail to streamline major project delivery across the southern region.

The project remains on track and is expected to be completed in late 2027.

SG42:25 Working Over or Near Water

NASC's Safety Guidance document SG42:25, which is to be released on 10 May, provides safety measures for scaffolding work carried out over / near water. Employers should conduct a comprehensive risk assessment for this kind of work, taking into account the hazards identified and evaluated during the assessment, to develop a safe system of work.

Employers are also responsible for providing their workers with the necessary safety information, instruction, training, and supervision, as well as intensifying safety measures on the use of lifting appliances, mobile plant, lifejackets and buoyancy aids. Effective rescue and emergency arrangements should be established for work over / near water to safeguard workers in an emergency situation.



Palmers Scaffolding: Liverpool Street Station

Key features of Liverpool Street Station Roof Replacement Project work scope:

This Grade 1 listed building with a historically important structure needed a sympathetic solution to loading structural members. **PALMERS®** developed a complex scaffold design solution to mitigate roof loading issues.

Scaffolding access solutions were required to minimise impact on pedestrian flows as far as possible, especially on platform areas.

Liverpool St Station is considered to be subterranean, meaning the strict fire requirements for an underground station needed to be complied with.

Palmers has delivered the installation, movement and removal of multiple mobile suspended scaffolding protection platforms to facilitate the replacement of the roof cladding system. The scaffold was to be suspended from the internal roof steelwork to all four spans with exiting roof walkways providing access.

The primary works, logistics and scaffolding were undertaken during normal working hours. The works above the platforms and train lines were completed during planned possessions, including an eight-day closure of the mainline station during Christmas 2024.

Palmers Group's client on this project is Morgan Sindall Infrastructure on behalf of Network Rail. The project runs from September 2024 to May 2026.

Complex and demanding project

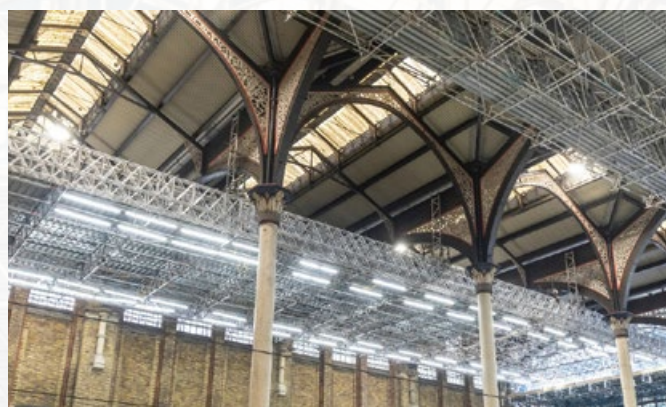
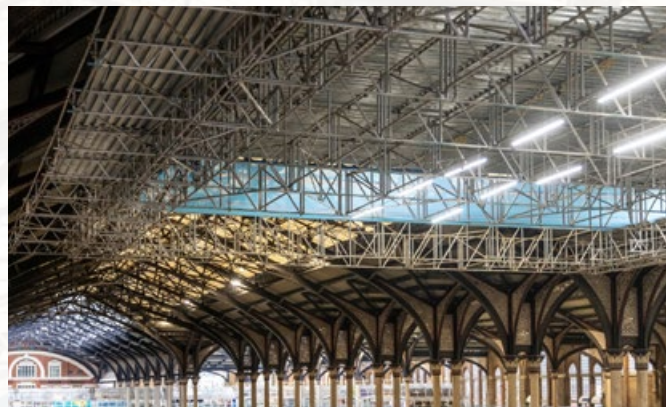
Palmers had to create a safe, business as usual, environment within a major London railway station whilst enabling overhead cladding replacement works to the roof to be undertaken without interruption to the day-to-day operation of the London terminus. The brief was to provide a lightweight suspended protection platform to maintain the safety of the railway and station users during the work to replace the roof cladding.

As with all railway stations constructed in the 19th century, suspending loads from the fabric of the building must be carefully considered to ensure elements of the building fabric framework are not overloaded. This was a challenge that Palmers Scaffolding and RDG Engineering were familiar with, having completed similar work at Paddington station, St Pancras, Kings Cross and others.

Using the Palmers aluminium 'Bridge Panel' frame system, a series of lightweight, robust, suspended protection platforms were designed and erected during station possession periods. These were to traverse the full length of London Liverpool Street Station train shed roof using 50m long protection platforms.

Launched from an erection gantry to the north of the train shed, these were rolled out into the roof to provide protection, allowing work to be carried out to the train shed roof above whilst the station remained open and fully operational.

Each of the four spans in the train shed has its own suspended protection platform which can move



independently but could also be brought together to cover the full width of the train shed. This versatility ensured optimisation of roof works as the suspended platforms could be moved independently to the location where work was being undertaken. Equally, where protection may be required across the whole train shed at one time, all the suspended platforms can be brought together to provide a full 30m of overhead protection across the train shed in an east/west direction.

This approach also enabled a full layer of protection to cover any overhead works in the east/west transept location in the train shed.

Apart from the versatility of the Bridge Panel beam system, the success of the project also relied on the bespoke platform roller system specifically developed by Palmers, enabling the large span suspended platforms to be effortlessly moved through the train shed.

Station constraints led to the use of bespoke beam and spigot systems derived from standard industry solutions such as 750mm X beams.

Specialist equipment

Palmers were best placed to deploy the use of their aluminium Bridge Panel system, which gave the flexibility through the crossover spigot to install clusters of longitudinal beams to span both the length and width of the decks, and allow loading to be taken at the strong points in the existing roof steelwork. Along with other Palmers bespoke system elements and pressed metal decking to keep weight to a minimum, this was key to being able to design and build a suspended working platform that met all the requirements for safety at a major London station and be within the roof's loading parameters.



Sky Scaffolding Midlands Ltd: Castle Bridge

Castle Bridge, a historic Grade II* listed structure dating back to 1793, spans the River Avon and is a key route in Warwick. It carries the A425 Banbury Road and is near Warwick Castle.

Due to its heritage status, significant stonework repairs were required, which involved a highly technical scaffolding solution.

The bridge is a vital link in Warwick's infrastructure, providing both pedestrian and vehicular access. The restoration is crucial for the safety and preservation of this regional landmark.

The project has lasted 18 months, with completion scheduled for Spring 2025. The main challenge was the restriction on encroaching into the road, as the bridge forms a critical traffic route.

Sky Scaffolding Midlands' design incorporated steel ballast in the form of 20 tonnes of specially purchased flat steel sections. This high-density ballast provided the necessary high-density weight for stability without encroaching on the carriageway, thus allowing Sky to maintain pedestrian access on the pavement, without reducing the width of the carriageway.

The scaffold included large cantilever beams extending 8 metres from each bank and a 20-metre long cantilever droplift scaffold over the crown of the arch. This unique design was crucial to provide access for the stonework repairs while minimising disruption.

Primary challenge

One of the primary challenges in this project was erecting a hanging scaffold with only 1.8m of available width for the



support scaffold. Due to the bridge's role as a key traffic route, Sky was not permitted to encroach onto the highway. This constraint significantly limited the footprint of the scaffold's support structure, making it difficult to achieve the necessary counterbalance for the cantilevered sections.

To overcome this challenge, Sky implemented a high-density steel ballast system rather than traditional concrete or water-based counterweights. Steel has a density 3.3 times higher than concrete and 7.85 times higher than water, allowing Sky to maximise the effectiveness of the counterweight within the limited space. By positioning the ballast with its centre of gravity at the maximum distance from the fulcrum, they increased the lever arm of the cantilever, achieving the required structural stability without expanding beyond the available 1.8m footprint.

Collaboration and Safety

Throughout the project, Sky worked closely with the local council, the bridge remediation contractor and the stonemasons to align on both technical design and safety considerations. Pedestrian safety was a top priority, so the company implemented secure barriers, clear signage, and monitoring to prevent unauthorised access to the scaffold. Additionally, the work took place during night-time road closures to minimise the impact on daily traffic.



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NASC MANIFESTO

NASC has created a manifesto which will be a key document as the organisation enters the corridors of power, seeking to influence political decisions in the best interests of the scaffolding industry. It outlines a number of issues that politicians and civil servants must pay attention to if the country is to support the creation of infrastructure, jobs and education.

The manifesto seeks to give those in power a more complete picture of the scaffolding sector, rather than its stereotyped image. Scaffolding is a high-tech, highly-skilled industry, but public and official recognition of its significance and the skills required remain limited. NASC supports an industry-wide rise in standards and increased reporting and prosecution of non-compliant firms to help uphold those standards.

The construction industry heavily relies on NASC members, but their services also extend to schools, hospitals, warehouses, and critical infrastructure. Scaffolding is vital for the UK's transition to greener energy and the entertainment sector. The industry has evolved significantly, becoming more skilled and better paid, yet it still faces challenges in training and public perception.

NASC advocates for better training provisions for young scaffolders and supports the development of full-time courses for 16-18-year-olds. The organisation calls for government support to address regional disparities in skills and to promote vocational learning. NASC also emphasises the need for strategic planning in housebuilding and infrastructure projects to ensure efficient and timely delivery.

Health and safety has improved dramatically in the scaffolding sector. NASC's accreditation and auditing processes, along with the impact of CISRS, have contributed to this progress. The organisation supports robust enforcement of health and safety regulations and welcomes the establishment of the Building Safety Regulator (BSR).

Scaffolding plays a crucial role in the UK's sustainable energy transition, supporting the construction of renewable energy systems and retrofitting energy-efficient technologies. The industry is committed to minimising its



Clive Dickinson

environmental impact through innovative design and construction techniques. NASC members use lightweight, modular, and reusable scaffolding systems to reduce waste and save materials, contributing to a greener future.

Clive Dickinson, CEO of NASC, comments: "We have begun a lobbying campaign at all levels of



Gary Sambrook and Gillian Keegan at NASC's Parliamentary Reception

Government and civil service to influence change. It will be a long road because this is a new activity for NASC – but we've already had some good results, such as the softening of the English and Maths requirements in Apprenticeships, which NASC had been vociferously lobbying for.

"There are a number of current areas of focus: firstly, we need decision-makers at the highest level to understand scaffolding and access, to get rid of the view that it is an unskilled job and to help people understand the urgent skills shortage that requires both investment in the scaffolders of the future but also the adding of scaffolding to the Immigration Salary List immediately to make up the shortfall in talent while the next generation of UK scaffolders learn their trade. The pandemic and exit from the EU have left scaffolding – along with many other construction disciplines – painfully short of qualified operatives.

"Secondly, we need to look at further education and how colleges operate. One of the main issues for colleges is the amount of space it takes to run a high quality scaffolding course compared to other trades. This is similar to the challenge roofing faced and addressed. We need to seek a solution that creates learning opportunities for potential scaffolders and is financially viable for colleges.

"Thirdly, we must help the Government understand what good procurement practice looks like in our industry and how the change from PAS91 to CAS is positive as far as it goes but none of the CAS organisations are scaffolding-specific, complete with all of its unique, safety-critical elements.

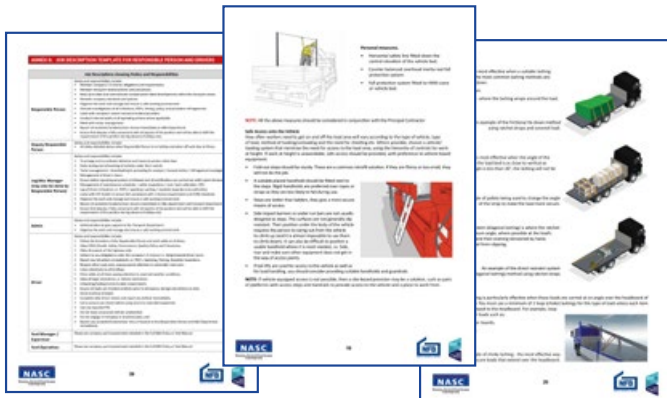
"Finally, when Government addresses structural issues that require fundamental industry change – like the response to Grenfell, for example, and the introduction of the Building Regulator – NASC must be part of the conversation. Scaffolding is at the heart of every project.

"Our campaigning work is only just beginning and it can take a while to build the relationships in Government that can help effect change but I believe this is a critical role for NASC as it will benefit its members, the industry as a whole – and society at large."

CRUCIAL TRANSPORT SAFETY GUIDANCE TO BE RELEASED

SG30:25 Management of Transport and Safe Loading for the Scaffolding Contractor will be launched in June, bringing critical and detailed information and guidance to scaffolding contractors. There are stringent rules, regulations and laws around transport, and a duty of care around loading that could be the difference between life and death, so every scaffolding contractor is encouraged to read and absorb this important guidance.

Every year, about 50 people are killed and more than



5,000 people are injured in accidents involving workplace transport. The most common causes are people falling from or being struck by a vehicle, objects falling from a vehicle, or vehicles overturning. This guidance provides advice for employers on what they need to do to comply with the law and reduce risk. It is also useful for the responsible person, managers, supervisors, employees, safety representatives and scaffolding contractors of all sizes.

The document includes:

- managing workplace transport safety
- driver roles and responsibilities
- securing of loads and safe loading and unloading of vehicles
- movement of vehicles on site, and much more.

It is a comprehensive and invaluable document to help scaffolding contractors keep themselves, their clients and members of the public safe.



80 YEARS OF NASC: THE 1950s

One of the first visible outputs of NASC was the original British standard for scaffolding BS1139 issued in the early 1950s. The vast majority of this standard was written by the four original member companies. This standard was followed by others such as the British Standard for Scaffold Boards.

Around 1950, the four original companies who constituted NASC were joined by Palmers, Stevens and Carter, Sterling Safeway and Acro, making a total of eight full member companies. By the early 1950s there were also associate members who paid a membership fee of £30 per year. Early meetings were very autocratic, with the whisky being passed around. However, as new members joined it became more and more boisterous...

The 1950s also saw more and more scaffold hire companies – the high investment required to purchase equipment had previously kept the number of hirers very low.

After Scaffolding (Great Britain) led the way by patenting a frame system, others were entering the market in the 1950s, including an American system from Sterling Safeway.

The 1950s were notable for the constraints brought in by the introduction of new regulations and by shortages from the war, and the industry would have to wait until the 1960s before the good times rolled for scaffolders.



SUMMER SAFETY CONFERENCE

The NASC Summer Safety Conference is a new, half-day event for NASC members. Taking place on 12 June at Spanset's offices in Middlewich, it will feature the launch of the 2025 NASC Safety Report, a presentation from HSE's Nina Day and a series of safety demonstrations. This is an opportunity to get practical advice and take away useful tips, as well as staying abreast of the latest safety guidance. To register, please [click here](#)

REGIONAL MEETINGS

NASC's Regional Meetings are where members can get together to network, learn the latest news from NASC and hear high-quality guest speakers address the important issues for their business. Forthcoming Regional Meetings are:

- Thursday 22 May – Northern and North West – Durham Cricket Ground
- Thursday 5 June – South West & South Wales – The Leonardo, Plymouth
- Thursday 10 July – Scotland & NI – Holiday Inn, Glasgow Airport
- Tuesday 16 September – London and South East – Venue TBC
- Thursday 23 October – Northern and North West – Radisson Blu Manchester Airport
- Thursday 11 December – Midlands – MTC, Coventry

Register now for your regional meeting at <https://nasc.org.uk/events/>

SCAFFEX25 – THE SCAFFOLDING AND ACCESS WORLD UNDER ONE ROOF

It is back and, after the rousing success of ScaffEx24 in Belfast, it will be a bigger, better and bolder ScaffEx in 2025.

Taking place at Manchester Central on 11 and 12 September, ScaffEx25 will see the scaffolding and access sector gather for a two-day exhibition and conference, as well as celebrating the 2025 Scaffolding Excellence Awards. The organisers are also looking forward to celebrating NASC's 80th anniversary.

Although 2025 marks NASC's 80th year, it is not bringing the scaffolding and access sector together in one place to look back. Rather, this event will be focused on the future. NASC is proud of its 80-year heritage, and the central role it has played in the transformation of the sector over that time. But, as the pace of innovation and change in all parts of society and the economy accelerates, it sees a future for scaffolding and access where the next 20 years will witness even more upheaval, revolution and transformation than the last 80.

The future of scaffolding

This is why the theme for the ScaffEx25 conference is the Future of Scaffolding. Show organisers have gathered an all-star line-up of speakers from across the scaffolding and access sector, including fellow scaffolding practitioners, relevant politicians driving policy in the sector and representatives from leading industry organisations. ScaffEx is bringing together those shaping policy and those living with the reality of those policies to build a conference

programme that will inspire, educate, entertain and inform.

The aim of the conference is to leave attendees with practical, actionable insights and meaningful takeaways on areas such as health & safety, education and training and innovation, as well as offering practical tips and first-hand stories from the scaffolding frontline. Speakers will share their experiences of growing and running a scaffolding business while dealing with practical issues such as social media, disaster recovery and reputation management.

With leading business journalists Nina Hossain and Sophie Long on hand to host the event, the conference will involve a mix of inspirational talks and panel discussions as well as deep dives into the key topics that will define the future of scaffolding.

A bigger and better exhibition

Meanwhile, the visitor experience in the exhibition hall for 2025 will be completely transformed from last year. The space available is so much bigger in all dimensions, allowing for taller, bigger and more interesting construction. Some major brands are expected to build some pretty impressive structures that allow them to best show off the capabilities of their products. There will also be new features for 2025, including a special NASC members' lounge, a training pavilion focused on the UK's CISRS training centres and an area for live demonstrations. The NASC van will also be back, once



again creating its own kind of Buzz.

Participating companies so far include our principal sponsor, Layher UK, as well as Alimak, AtPac, Avontus, BDS, Catari, Chevron Traffic Management, Citation, Creator Scaffold Designs, Footprint, G-Deck, George Roberts, Kewazo, Leach's, NASC Insurance Services, Peri, Pilosio, Prime Scaffold and Structural Designs, ProScaf, SHP Services, Smart Scaffolder, SpanSet, SP Group, St Helens Plant, and Trad UK.

Confirmed speakers include: Nina Hossain, Sophie Long, Sean Pike, Clive Dickin, Wayne Connolly, Patrick Craven, Tim Balcon, Tina Wiecezorek, Alan Harris, Tony Jester, James Talman, Luis McCarthy. There are many more high-profile speakers who organisers are hoping to be able to confirm soon.

SCAFFOLDING EXCELLENCE AWARDS NOW OPEN



The Scaffolding Excellence Awards are now open for entries. NASC members are encouraged to prepare and submit their application before the 6 June deadline to be in with a chance of winning one of the nine prestigious awards.

After a wonderful Awards in Belfast in 2024, judges will be looking out for the same levels of high-quality projects, teams and individuals. The Awards categories are:

- Apprentice of the Year
- Product of the Year
- Service of the Year
- Scaffold Design of the Year
- Project of the Year (Small)
- Project of the Year (Medium)
- Project of the Year (Large)
- Project of the Year (Major)
- Lifetime Achievement Award

The Awards are free to enter and have been designed to be straightforward to complete. Enter now - you won't know if you don't try!

Find out more and enter the Awards by going to: nasc.org.uk/awards



REGISTER FREE TODAY!

Tickets to the conference and expo are free, but must be booked, and tickets to the Scaffolding Excellence Awards are now on sale.

Don't miss out: click here nasc.org.uk/scaffex for more information or to book.

SCAFFEX25
MANCHESTER 11-12 SEPT

Layher

More Possibilities. The Scaffolding System.

Layher to sponsor ScaffEx25

System scaffold specialist Layher UK is the main sponsor of ScaffEx25.

Managing Director Sean Pike explains why this was an important move for Layher UK: "In just its second outing, this is already the premier event for the scaffolding and access industry. Our decision to take centre stage as headline sponsor is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to driving innovation, raising standards and supporting the future of our industry."

"As a business built on engineering excellence, innovation, and customer partnership, we see ScaffEx as the perfect platform to share knowledge, showcase progress and contribute meaningfully to industry-wide conversations."

"At Layher, we believe in and deliver true innovation — not only in terms of the systems we provide, but also in the way the industry communicates, collaborates and evolves. Being the main sponsor of ScaffEx gives us the opportunity to help shape the event's impact and energy, while supporting the values of professionalism and progress that we champion every day."

"We expect to engage, inspire, and be inspired. ScaffEx provides an ideal space to connect with our customers, partners, and the wider scaffolding community - from business owners and project managers to designers, engineers and apprentices. We hope the event will spark valuable conversations, challenge conventional thinking, and shine a spotlight on the ideas and technologies that will shape the future of access."

"As sponsors, we also expect to contribute to the quality of the event's experience through technical insight, and some good old-fashioned scaffolding enthusiasm."

"Our stand at ScaffEx25 will be more than just a showcase, it will be a hub of innovation, demonstration and conversation. Visitors can expect hands-on access to our latest system developments, including advances in digital design integration, safety features, and productivity-enhancing accessories."

"We'll also be highlighting how Layher systems are delivering value across a wide range of sectors, from construction and infrastructure to industrial maintenance and events."



Sean Pike, Layher

CISRS TO TACKLE CARD FRAUD

The Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme (CISRS) plays a crucial role in upholding safety standards by certifying the competence of scaffolders through a rigorous system of training, assessment, and verification. However, the increasing prevalence of fraudulent CISRS scaffolders cards poses a threat to both worker safety and the integrity of the industry.

Despite the robust framework behind CISRS certification, fraudulent activity has emerged, including:

- Fake cards: Counterfeit cards produced to resemble legitimate CISRS cards.
- Misuse of legitimate cards: Workers using someone else's card or a card that doesn't reflect their actual level of competence.
- Forged documentation: False training records or certificates used to apply for CISRS cards.

Card fraud not only puts workers at clear risk but can also expose contractors and companies to legal liabilities, loss of accreditations and reputational damage.

Paul Napper, Head of Training and Education at NASC, comments: "NASC and CISRS takes card fraud incredibly seriously – we have a zero-tolerance approach to fraud. We investigate all instances reported to us and we have set up a dedicated email address to make it easier for members to report instances of fraud to us. We will liaise with the appropriate authorities to minimise the occurrence of fraud. Furthermore, the new digital cards coming in 2026 will enable us to further ensure that cardholders are genuine and competent."

If you are concerned about CISRS card fraud, please email fraud@cisrs.org.uk



ENIGMA-IS BUILDING TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE



NASC member Enigma Industrial Services (Enigma-IS) has recognised the immense potential of providing young people with work experience, which blends hands-on experience and structured training.



During early 2024, Enigma-IS developed the Construction Career Pathway programme for ten young people at Liberton High School. Launched on 10 September 2024, it completed on 18 March 2025.

The Construction Career Pathway programme consists of several modules which explore the construction industry, its stakeholders and legislative requirements, and is aimed at increasing career awareness and skills development. By learning alongside experienced professionals, participants gained a deeper understanding of the industry's best practices and safety protocols.

This immersive learning environment fosters a sense of camaraderie and mentorship, empowering young people to develop their problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and technical expertise. It also strengthens Enigma-IS's engagement with young people, the workers of the future.

The programme was a success, with three young people now in the process of engaging with the Edinburgh Access Branch General Manager to become part of the team as apprentices.

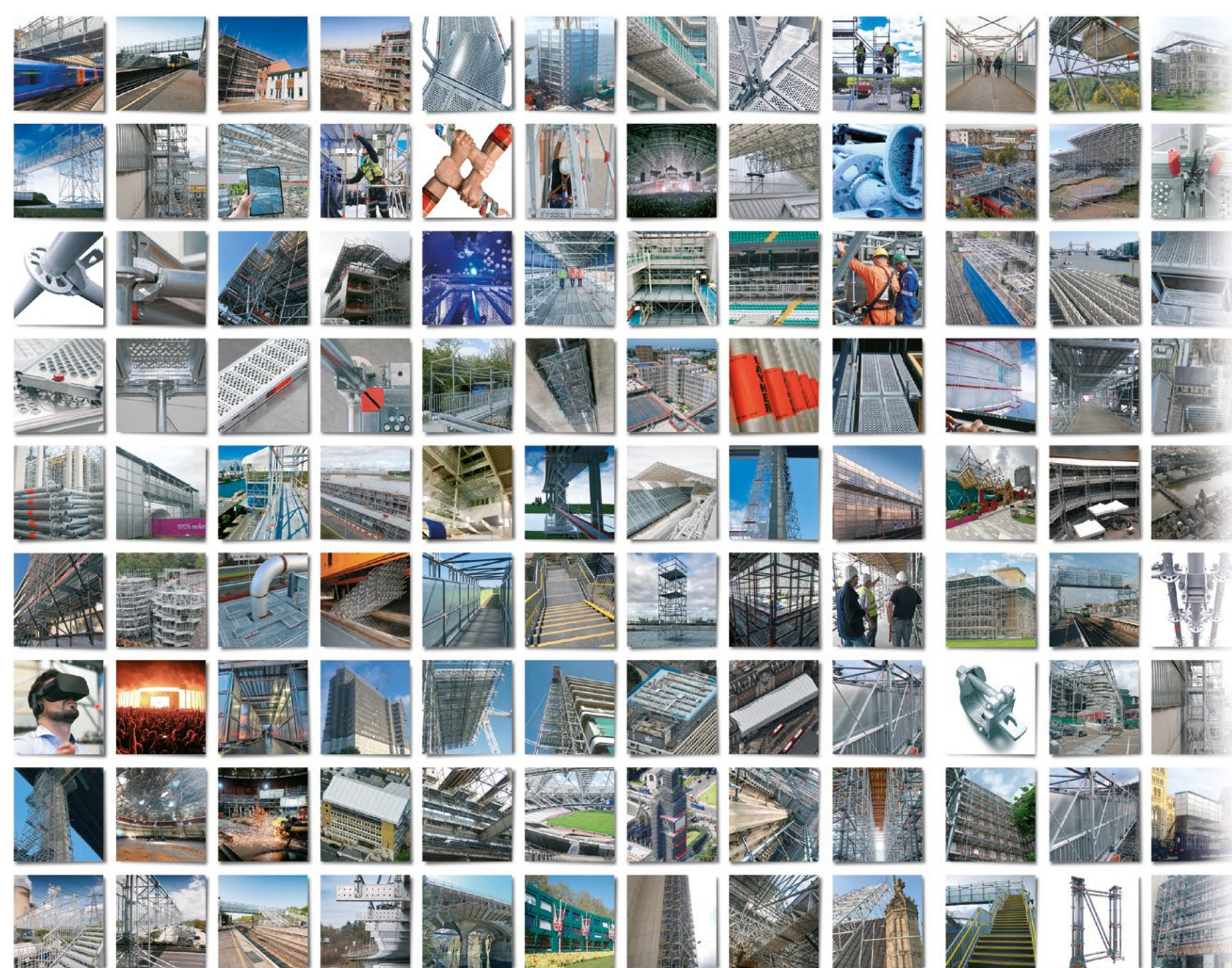


LAUNCHES BUSINESS PLAN 2025-26

The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) has launched its Business Plan for 2025-26, outlining the practical steps CITB will take to support the construction industry in recruiting, training and retaining a competent and skilled workforce. This Business Plan sets out how CITB will address the skills and training challenges facing the construction industry in 2025-26.

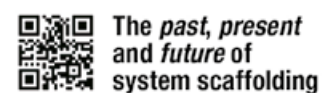
The Plan sets out three key pillars to address the top priorities the construction industry wants CITB to focus on: getting more trained people into industry; making sure good quality, relevant training is available at the right time and place; and improving the skills of the current workforce.

To support these pillars, CITB is investing over £15 million in its National Construction College (NCC) to expand training provision across its three sites. This investment will increase the range and volume of apprenticeship and commercial training opportunities, with a focus on sustainability and improving the learner experience.



For more than
75 years,
Layher has focused
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not imitation.

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and future of
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