

New meaning for corporate  
social responsibility

Developing business-  
community relationships

Designing for better  
human outcomes

Ensuring investment goes  
further and achieves more

# Building socially inclusive outcomes



# Making a meaningful and lasting social difference

## Keith Howells

Chief executive and chair  
of Mott MacDonald

In the wake of the financial crisis, a climate has evolved in which large portions of society feel that institutions, from governments to banks, and the investments they make in everything from transport to urban infrastructure, serve an elite few, not the majority. With governments pouring money into infrastructure to help boost economic growth, *it is vital that the industry engages with the communities affected by projects, to understand and address their concerns and aspirations, creating opportunities for all to contribute and benefit.*

To rebuild trust, our engagement needs to be transparent and sincere, and the outcomes delivered need to be lasting.

This publication brings together and shares the learnings of a diverse group of infrastructure clients, owner-operators, stakeholders, and creators – all of whom have challenged infrastructure industry norms by acting to identify and deliver social opportunities that would not exist under ‘business as usual’.

In short, making a meaningful and lasting social difference is good not just for the immediate recipients. *Because the socioeconomic benefits ripple out, it's good for all of us, now and in the future.*



## Ten angles on social inclusion

- 4 The neglected pillar: social sustainability
- 6 More than sand: reviving Colwyn Bay
- 8 Designing for better patient outcomes: the experience of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
- 10 People, place, time: the role of design on HS2
- 12 Connecting Rossington: reviving a former coal area
- 15 Project Riverside and the regeneration of Aberfan
- 16 Developing business-community partnerships: Anglian Water's @one Alliance
- 18 Providing inclusive environments: more than just wheelchair access
- 21 What can businesses do to make themselves more equality friendly?
- 22 All together now: spreading prosperity



# The neglected pillar

**Davide Stronati**  
Global sustainability leader  
at Mott MacDonald



We commonly talk about the three pillars of sustainability – economic, environmental, and social. Yet the social pillar tends to attract the least attention when we're thinking about infrastructure projects.

Infrastructure is rightly seen as requisite for economic growth, and environmental protection is now seen as fundamental to the progress of projects. As it should be.

But too rarely is attention paid to who in society benefits most from economic infrastructure. The reality is that the dividend is unequal, and we all know that inequality breeds insecurity – and that poses a fundamental risk to society.

At the extremes, it provokes conflict between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' which can manifest itself in many ways from crime to civil disobedience and even war.

It's clear that the world is a more fragile place when it leaves large sections of society behind in the pursuit of growth.

But the link between environmental sustainability and social outcomes is even more crucial when you think of the importance of maintaining an environment in which we can enjoy healthy and prosperous lives.

Climate change, air pollution, water quality, ecosystem fragility, species loss – all are issues that impact directly on our health and wellbeing, and thus on society at large.

The mass migrations we're seeing are not just the result of conflict, but also of environmental degradation, the struggle to survive and the desire of people living at the margins to find a better life. In the infrastructure sector, we work towards building the communities of tomorrow, and what's become increasingly clear in recent times is that we have an obligation to provide solutions that are more inclusive, and to play our part in addressing inequalities.

**It's easy to lay the blame for deepening inequality at the feet of others**, but all in the infrastructure industry – clients, investors, consultants, contractors and suppliers – need to change the way in which we think about projects, and the way we conduct business. We need to help foster more socially inclusive outcomes.

**At the end of the day, we need to remember that most, if not all, of what we do is about improving people's lives** – whether that's providing safer water, reliable electricity, a better living environment, improved healthcare facilities or a faster commute to work.

In September 2015, the UN launched 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Unlike the Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs are not just about the developing world. They apply equally to developed nations.

The SDGs are aimed at forging a path towards a fairer and more just society, and our industry has an obligation to contribute to their fulfilment.

Planned and delivered with thought, infrastructure can enable outcomes that help resolve many of the challenges we face as a society today, and will face tomorrow.



# More than sand – reviving Colwyn Bay

## Geraint Edwards

Head of environment, roads  
and facilities at Conwy  
County Borough Council

Colwyn Bay in north Wales looked back to its Victorian heyday when it built new flood protection.

In the 19th century, the town's vast sandy beach was a magnet for tourists. But a century on, the beach had been eroded, leaving the seafront vulnerable to damage by winter storms – but worse, leaving this faded tourist town with too few visitors to sustain jobs. Colwyn Bay was economically deprived with high unemployment.

Floods caused by a storm surge in December 2013 resulted in 400 residents being evacuated. The Welsh government prioritised funding for new flood protection. Innovatively, its cash was combined with European Regional Development Funding to create a £30M

fund aimed at achieving twin outcomes: to protect the town from the sea and revive the local economy.

Fortifying the seafront with rock armour would have reduced the risk of flooding but would have irrevocably cut the town off from the sea, closing the door on seaside tourism for ever. **Instead, the council decided to pursue a more imaginative solution backed by the local community.** This involved the construction of a groyne and replenishment of the beach with more than 1Mt of imported sand.

The beach, which is held in place by the groyne, soaks up the energy of pounding winter waves, protecting 200 properties, part of the A55 and the railway from flooding.

Recreating the beach has also reinvigorated Colwyn Bay's relationship with the sea. It is a Blue Flag bathing beach used all year round by visitors and locals. Land reclaimed as part of the protection work houses a community-operated watersports facility and a restaurant with a fantastic view, run by celebrity chef Bryn Williams.

**What has been created is so much more than flood protection or a new beach. It is a new future for Colwyn Bay.**





# Designing for better patient outcomes

## Steve McGuire

Chief executive of Essentia, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

## Diana Crawshaw

Chair of Guy's and St Thomas' Patient Reference Group

**The new Cancer Centre at London's Guy's Hospital was a collaborative project, with the voice of patients at its heart. That's because we know there is a positive impact on patients if they are treated in a better environment.**

The £160M facility opened in September 2016 and was designed with the patients, for the patients. It is part of the trust's vision for creating a hospital that doesn't feel like a hospital.

It starts with convenience: the centre brings together under one roof treatments that were previously delivered across 13 different locations in eight buildings – much less wayfinding and travelling for vulnerable and often very ill people to do.

Radiotherapy is conventionally housed in basements – from structural and radiation shielding viewpoints, it makes sense to house the heavy machines underground. But a subterranean facility does little for the emotional and psychological wellbeing of patients. The centre is the first in Europe to provide radiotherapy above ground, so that patients can see outside. **Art, colour and cosy meeting areas all contribute to creating spaces that feel welcoming and positive rather than cold and clinical.**

The building team also had regular contact with residents to ensure their lives were not affected too much by the building.

Also, local people were employed to work on the project, providing jobs and skills training, as well as the opportunity to feel they had contributed to something important.

For the Patient Reference Group, the centre is a wonderful example of how having patients as the focus of design can produce uplifting infrastructure. And for the hospital's project management organisation, Essentia, it is a showcase for what can be achieved by the NHS.





# People, place, time

## Sadie Morgan

Director of architects dRMM and chair of HS2 Design Panel



Construction of the new HS2 railway and its associated development will amount to around £56bn of investment in the UK over the next 20 years.

It is the biggest construction project undertaken in Britain in more than a century, with a social reach proportionate to its scale.

Indeed, economic stimulus, national rebalancing of wealth and social uplift are the prime justifications for the project and we want everyone in the country to feel proud of it while it is being built and beyond.

It is to the credit of HS2 that the project has been determined to engage local communities from the start, with the objective of benefiting the many, not just a few. And that is the purpose of the HS2 Design Panel. Our design vision is to touch people, place and time.

### People

Demonstrate the value of great design in creating places for people – that encourage diverse activities, provide access and promote inclusion. Create environments that are functional, affordable, safe and uplifting. How? By engaging with local communities and inspiring them.

### Place

The project in its entirety and in its parts must be fit for purpose, sensitive to its context, and create a sense of national pride and ownership. How? With rigorous environmental and social standards, and by creating buildings, structures and environments that add to local and national culture and heritage.

### Time

Most important is that HS2 stands the test of time for future generations. How? By establishing the panel at the beginning of the process, so that the places created and the people who use them are front of mind from the get-go. It is a strategy that I hope will be adopted by more national infrastructure projects in the future.



# Connecting Rossington

## – infrastructure helps revive former coal area

### Jo Miller

Chief executive of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

### Lee Tillman

Assistant director of strategy and performance at Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

**One 4km long, £56M road is changing the future of an entire community in the South Yorkshire town of Doncaster.**

The project, known as the Great Yorkshire Way, links the M18 with the A638 south of the town. It runs past Rossington, a town built around one of Yorkshire's most productive mines. Although the pit survived the 1980s, when many others were closed, output was severely cut and the town suffered serious economic decline, high unemployment and deprivation. At one point, 11 of its 20 wards were in the bottom 10% of UK deprivation indices. The pit was finally closed in 2016.

With the town's reason for being removed, a new purpose had to be found. Rossington needed to attract investment on a large scale. The abandoned colliery site offered a large area of land. Miners' housing was typically built close to the pit head, and that meant there were large numbers of people ready to work nearby. The Great Yorkshire Way project offered the opportunity to unlock Rossington's potential.

Care was taken to make sure that the road which passes Rossington also connected it. From being a cut-off community, Rossington is now well linked into the national motorway network. Employment and economic opportunities are being created at a 560,000m<sup>2</sup>, £500M new iPort inland freight distribution centre backed by developer Veridan. In all, 5000 new jobs will be created.

Around 20,000 new homes are also being built. Mixed communities are being created, including high-value residential and social housing as well as schools and other necessary community amenities.

The road also provides young people in Rossington with easy access to further education and universities in neighbouring cities. One of HS2's two High Speed Rail Colleges is located in nearby Doncaster with places for 1050 young people, continuing a proud railway tradition for a town that built the famous Flying Scotsman and the Mallard steam engines. There are plans to extend the new road over the M18 to Robin Hood Airport, the fastest-growing airport outside London. And there are ideas for a new town centre and waterfront business district.

It's a textbook demonstration of how infrastructure can have socially inclusive outcomes. Because local people could see how they would benefit they fully supported the development in and around Rossington, even though it was one of the largest single planning applications on green belt land in the UK.

**The focus is on good growth with benefits that local people can feel.** We started from a low base, took a lot of risks and that has paid off.

- The Great Yorkshire Way opened in February 2016. It was funded by £18M from the Regional Growth Fund, £4M from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and £34M from developers. It was built by Carillion and designed by Mott MacDonald. Original scheme costs were value engineered down from £100M to £56M to make it affordable. Large volumes of the construction materials were locally sourced.



**5k**  
new jobs created

**20k**  
new homes built





# Project Riverside and the regeneration of Aberfan



## Brian Mainsbridge

Councillor, Merthyr Tydfil  
County Borough Council

## Paul Maliphant

Project director at Mott MacDonald

**The lesson from an exhausted Welsh town is that small details can have big impacts on the outcome of infrastructure projects. They reward attention.**

Just over 50 years ago, in October 1966, Aberfan junior school and neighbouring houses were engulfed in a torrent of liquefied mining waste, unleashed by the collapse of a colliery spoil heap. At a stroke, 116 children and 28 adults lost their lives.

The community of the Welsh town was deeply traumatised – the psychological and emotional effects rippled from one generation to the next. And the community suffered a second devastating blow with the closure of Merthyr Vale Colliery, Aberfan's main employer, in 1989. For decades, the town felt hopeless. Its people were economically and physically isolated from even the nearby city of Cardiff. But hope is returning.

The Welsh government and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council have put combined investment of £8.2M into flood protection, a new access road, bridge and footbridge that reconnect the communities of Merthyr Vale and Aberfan, and a new waste recycling centre. Combined with a new community primary school opened in 2012 and further works to move existing homes out of a high-risk flood zone, this is known as Project Riverside.

New homes for residents plagued by flooding have been provided through a niche public private partnership arrangement where builder Lovell constructed 11 new houses, sold six and gave five to the council for the use of those most in need. And the new road has provided much-needed access at the former Merthyr Vale Colliery site for much larger-scale housing development.

Project Riverside has been a huge shot in the arm for the town and changed the community's focus from the disaster and the economic impact of the colliery closure to anticipation of a brighter future.

**Community-oriented 'add-ons' have turned the project from one simply providing improved amenities, into one that engages and motivates local people.** The new footbridge provides easy access to the banks of the now healthy and biodiverse River Taff. The St John's Ambulance Hall has been refurbished, while a new community facility, built with support from the Aberfan Disaster Fund, will host events, such as the town's Christmas Fayre, and is home to a new Scout troop.

These developments would not have happened without Project Riverside, but they are now firmly established and are symbolic of the community's emerging focus on the future and people's appetite to reach out and interact after years of isolation.

In truth, the add-ons were as essential in turning Aberfan around as the infrastructure. They have been recognised by a Responsible Business Award from Business in the Community Cymru, and Mott MacDonald is using these experiences to launch a new internal initiative, Think Future Generations! This pushes staff to consider what legacy the company leaves behind after a contract has been delivered.

- Working with the council and Welsh government on Project Riverside were Mott MacDonald, Alun Griffiths, Communities First, Capita and Tony Gee.



# Developing business-community partnerships

## Dale Evans

Director of Anglian Water @one Alliance

**“Get out there and find ways to work with the communities we serve.”**

In essence, that is the direction that Anglian Water's chief executive Peter Simpson has given the @one Alliance, the consortium responsible for designing and building the company's capital construction programme.

Anglian Water has pioneered collaborative working to great effect on its projects. Peter wants to see the same behaviour in the way we interact with the communities who are our customers, and from which we will recruit many of our future staff. Anglian Water and Alliance partners want to make a positive difference to local life for everyone's benefit.

As a starting point, we are focusing on Wisbech and its population of 30,000. We hope the ideas we develop there can become a template to be rolled out around the Anglian region. A big issue for Wisbech is high unemployment among 18 to 25 year-olds – surprising when

Cambridge is thriving just 25 miles away. So there was a clear benefit to both the community and to us to work on initiatives to improve employability, create jobs and support education and training.

Key for us was to listen to local charities and educational institutions, the council, chamber of commerce and other local bodies, and gear our activities to creating outcomes aligned with their ambitions.

One of the main initiatives so far is our partnership with the College of West Anglia. We sponsor its mechanical and electrical course, which always used to be focused on the automotive sector but is now much broader. The course gives students skills that are useful across a wider range of industries and, crucially, expand their horizons. Of course it also aligns with our goals. There are 50 students on the course and we guarantee all of them an interview with an Alliance partner. We are also supporting the

construction programme at the college and there are currently 30 people going through that – again developing skills that we may be able to use. Longer-term we plan to engage with other colleges in East Anglia.

We've worked with the community to develop a strategy for Wisbech beyond 2020. This has included a proposal to reopen the rail line between the town and Cambridge, which would provide young people in Wisbech with access to the wealth of education and employment opportunities just a short distance away.

Although it's relatively early days, strong community commitment is clearly of real value to us. That's why it has now been written into our corporate sustainability strategy, which guides our business going forward.

- @one Alliance members are Anglian Water Asset Delivery, Balfour Beatty, Barhale, Grontmij, Mott MacDonald Bentley, MWH and Skanska.

Why have we done this?

1.

We are a geographically rooted, local firm. Our business is focused on the Anglian region. This initiative strengthens that connection and demonstrates our commitment to playing a valuable role in the our community.

2.

It shows the power of collaborative working between the members of the @one Alliance, but also with our many stakeholders. It's not something we could easily do alone, but together really exciting things become possible.

3.

The links with the college open up new opportunities to go into schools and get young people excited about a career in our sector.

4.

And it's a great learning experience for our teams. People joining the Alliance are as interested in this initiative as the day job, adding effectively to employee engagement.





# Providing inclusive environments

## Geoff Cook

Associate professor, University of Reading School of Construction Management and Engineering

**Creating inclusive environments is not just about wheelchair access.**

Less than 8% of disabled people use wheelchairs, yet there are estimated to be 12.9M people in the UK with limiting long-term illnesses, impairments or disabilities. Some 45% of those are over the state pension age. **By 2030 there are expected to be 20M people over the age of 65 and 6M over 80.** The built environment needs to be created or adapted for people with a range of needs, including hearing or sight loss and/or a cognitive disability, as well as general physical issues that affect older members of society.

**This 'disabled' demographic is economically powerful.** Including their families, they have an annual spending power of about £200bn. There is a huge missed economic opportunity if the benefits of providing an inclusive environment are not realised.

Currently, 20% of 12.9M people with disabilities have difficulty accessing transport; 54% shops; 35% hospitals, 21% GP surgeries; and 21% theatres and cinemas. And the front doors of 84% of new homes are not wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair.

# 20%

people in UK living with disability

Where to start? The four most important features for designers to consider are:

- Level access to the entrances to buildings and transport vehicles
- Wide doors to allow wheelchair access
- Adequate space to allow wheelchairs to turn and not restrict access
- Accessible lavatories and changing places.

Of course, you shouldn't need the potential £200bn economic prize to convince you that inclusive design is the right thing to do. It's sobering that 12.9M people is equal to one in five Britons. Inclusion defines the morality of a society and should be the primary consideration.

But whatever the motivation, there's a lot of difference to make and the technical design information is readily available.

Let's get on with it!







# What can businesses do to make themselves more equality friendly?

**Dr Wanda Wyporska**

Executive director of  
The Equality Trust

**It's increasingly perceived that politics, education, legislation, regulation – most of the frameworks that structure life – stack the odds in favour of the 'haves'. No wonder trust has become an issue.**

The UK is one of the most unequal nations in the developed world – the seventh least equal in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

People on the UK national living wage would have to work 400 years to earn the annual average pay of a FTSE 100 chief executive – currently £5.8M. Inequality takes many other forms, but that financial contrast starkly illustrates the gulf that many feel has opened up in society.

The erosion of trust is a problem for businesses no less than politicians and government, with the potential to undermine shareholder confidence and the value of stocks. Businesses can build trust by taking steps to improve equality, for example:

- Putting workers on the company board and establishing workers' councils
- Recognising trade unions and consulting with workers
- Paying the living wage and publishing pay ratio comparisons between top directors and workers
- Recognising that socioeconomic background is a key part of diversity
- Ensuring a diverse range of employees and developing their potential
- Factoring an inequality impact assessment into every design brief to make sure infrastructure improves the life chances of the many.



# All together now

## Kerry Scott

Global leader for social inclusion  
at Mott MacDonald

**Growth has returned to many economies around the world in recent years. However, average incomes have continued to stagnate, while the gap between rich and poor has widened.**

It is increasingly understood that development does not always deliver the improvements in living standards for all sections of society that policymakers intend or expect. Indeed, social and economic disparities can be aggravated unless the needs of all groups in society are fully considered at the outset.

Awareness is emerging that a more inclusive approach to development and growth is needed so that a prosperous economy can also contribute to a more equal society, with the benefits shared more evenly. It's a vision in which the needs and views of people who are often overlooked – the young and old, minorities and those from deprived neighbourhoods – get addressed.

Social inclusion is now fully on national and global policy agendas. Under the Equality Act 2010, public sector bodies in the UK have a duty to consider the impacts of their plans and activities on 'protected characteristic' groups. Meanwhile, five of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals call for developers to keep inclusion and equality in sharp focus. But beyond statutory duties and moral calls to action, there are sound commercial reasons why the infrastructure sector should take inclusion seriously.

### Economic drivers

Income inequality is bad for growth. Reducing the income gap between high and low earners by raising wages at the lower end, and widening access to employment opportunities across society, stimulates demand for goods and services provided by private companies. Simultaneously this reduces demand for support from the public purse.

### Managing risk

Ensuring publicly funded projects maximise benefits and minimise adverse impacts makes practical sense. People who have been consulted and feel included are less likely to try to delay a project, which can be costly. And evidence shows that, when infrastructure is inclusive and accessible to a wide range of users, it is more financially sustainable.

### Doing the right thing

Building a shared vision for inclusive growth starts by aligning the priorities of policymakers and communities through engagement and discourse. Out of that can grow a clear and compelling inclusion roadmap, with performance indicators to measure success.

'Doing inclusion' in the infrastructure industry isn't easy. It requires changing the lens through which we view development. It involves taking a 'people perspective' and putting community considerations front and centre, rather than treating them as ancillary to design and development processes. It also needs to be recognised that benefits are sometimes difficult to quantify, at least immediately.

But none of this should dissuade attempts to deliver more inclusive outcomes. With public trust in public institutions and big business at a low ebb, there has rarely been a stronger argument or a better time to do it. Organisations that have taken this step have reaped the reward.

There is an African proverb that says: 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.' In the infrastructure sector, fast but short-term performance matters much less than sustained long-term achievement. That is why 'all together now' should be the industry mantra.





Opening opportunities with connected thinking.

Talk to us about your sustainability challenges:  
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