



*Dear MPA Members,*

In the previous 'Year In Action' I spoke of a pervasive feeling of uncertainty, and sadly little has changed on that score over the last 12 months. Recognising this, the theme of our 2017 Annual Conference was 'Future-Proofing Major Projects' or, to put it another way, how to cope with a highly uncertain future when managing projects. The conference keynote address from the Cosmologist and Astronomer Royal, Lord Rees, gave us a fascinating tour d'horizon of the

uncertainties of the universe, not least the prospects of the survival of the human race. This was an excellent way to put our immediate difficulties in context! The conference itself focused on the tools and techniques that project leaders can use to cope with uncertainty, mixed with personal examples from a range of organisations. If you missed it, there is an excellent highlights summary as well as a full report and a 'Future-Proofing Toolkit' available on our website.

In our summer lecture, Sadie Morgan spoke passionately about the importance of good design in major projects, and updated us on the work of the National Infrastructure Commission. I am delighted that Sadie has provisionally accepted my invitation to join the Major Projects Association Board, subject to members' approval at the AGM in November. Her fresh perspective, energy and enthusiasm will add much to our discussions.

The Board is currently working on a new strategy, which will be ready to discuss with members at next March's Main Reps meeting. We will also report then in detail on our achievements against the 2014–2017 strategy, but in summary we have achieved most of our targets, not least in growing the membership to 100. The Board's current view is that we should stick at around that number; maintaining the exclusivity of the 'club' and not putting further strain on the small, dedicated

staff, nor on numbers at our events. We want to preserve the feeling of intimacy that has been an important part of the ethos of the Association.

Do please feed in any views you have on this point to myself, Denise Bower, Manon Bradley or any of our Board members.

I will not enter into any unwise attempts to predict the future, other than to say that the next 12 months are likely to be

just as turbulent as the last. Meanwhile those of you at the front line of delivering the many great projects being progressed in UK at the moment are just going to have to keep your head down and press on while the political storms rage overhead. In the same way, the Association will continue to run its seminars, discussions, training courses, lectures and dinners, hopefully allowing all our members to share views on what we do best – getting on and building the future of this country.

With all best wishes,



**Tim Laurence**  
Chairman  
Major Projects Association

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