

# CIHT Northern Ireland 2024 Newsletter

## Message from CIHT NI Chair

Welcome to the Winter 2024 edition of our newsletter.



Michael Bell FCIHT CTPP – CIHT NI Chair

Taking some time to reflect, it is hard to believe that I am in my second year as Chair of CIHT Northern Ireland. I'm grateful for the support I have received from colleagues on Committee, allowing us to deliver the range of events we have for you as members. Our members are very important to us and we are keen to increase engagement and would love to hear from you if you feel you would like to contribute more, or indeed if you feel there are areas that we could improve in to provide more value for you as members.

Looking forward, we have a number of events to cover over the rest of the year before the AGM in May, but if you have any topics that would be of interest for a technical talk in the

second half of the year, I encourage you to get in touch.

I look forward to the rest of the term and hopefully will be able to meet up with many of our members at our upcoming events.

Michael Bell FCIHT CTPP

## Congratulations Karen McShane CIHT President

CIHT Northern Ireland is delighted to be represented nationally with Karen McShane as CIHT President for 2023 / 24. Here, Karen outlines her plans for her year in office.

As a person from Northern Ireland, it is a great honour to be elected as President and to be the first woman from the island of Ireland to hold that position, showing that it is not just for boys. In my year as President, I want to take the opportunity to debate Climate Change and the need for us all to take a look at how we travel. Looking back to the period following the second world war we nearly all lived and worked in our local neighbourhoods. My grandfather ran a local hardware general store and knew all the local community. Car ownership was low, its use even lower, and we walked several miles to school or work and actually went outside to run around, play and get the exercise we needed.

Sadly, times have changed, and we are all dependent on the use of our cars, and I see our health suffering as result. More importantly our planet is suffering, and we need to reverse the damage that carbon impact has done if we want future generations to enjoy our planet. Mid-June saw reports of Irish sea level temperatures rising by 4°C and this was

combined with long periods of sunshine followed by short thunderstorms with potential for flooding. All signs that we need at attitudinal change to climate action.

In my eyes this requires as monumental a change as when the Victorians introduced both our railway networks and our water infrastructure. The latter probably had as big an impact on health as the medical industry with clean water and sewerage treatment being provided. We do not want transport to be remembered in the future as a negative contributor to the health of our planet. Gustavo Petro, The Mayor of Bogota, said *“a developed country is not a place where the poor have cars. It's where the rich use public transportation.”* This is the attitudinal change that we must achieve if we want to realise Climate Action.

### **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

To achieve a significant benefit, we must look to everyone to try and make our transport infrastructure as inclusive as possible. We have Weavers Cross progressing in Belfast city centre and work has started on York Street Station, but these are two city-based projects.

We need to ensure that rural services are maintained and that we are ensuring the safety of all our travellers across the whole network. Translink have launched a study into the reuse of the Knockmore Line from Lisburn to Antrim and we await the outcome of this much needed feasibility study if we stand a chance of promoting more sustainable transport options.

To achieve this, it is important that we look to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) within our sector. CIHT's Routes to Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit featured as a recommendation in the Department for Transport's Strategy: Building Sustainable skills – Moving Britain. “Shifting the Dial” looks at Equity within our transport industry and

setting a goal of building a more inclusive transport system.

To achieve this, we need to have a diverse workforce and to bring in the new ideas that they will deliver. We need to provide opportunities for all sectors to become involved to ensure that we can deliver a truly inclusive society like that aspired to by the Mayor of Bogota.



### **Emerging Professionals Group**

Within CIHT NI we are keen to develop an Emerging Professionals Group (EPG), to be an integral part of our committee and who represent those are newer to working in the highways and transportation industry. The aim for the EPG would be to organise a number of events each year, including social events and a visit to a local highways and transportation project.

In September 2023, during Freshers Week, the CIHT NI Region we was delighted to work closely with Ulster University, Queens University Belfast and University of Galway to bring

together 180 first year civil engineering students for the first time, during Freshers Week.

With significant support from Translink and their Delivery Partners (Farrans Sacyr, Arup, Babcock, Arcadis and Graham Group), the students were given a tour of the main works construction site for the new Belfast Transport Hub, as well as an overview of the project. When completed in 2025, the new Belfast Grand Central Station will be largest integrated transport facility on the island of Ireland. The recently opened busway bridge allowed the students to safely undertake a site boundary walkaround offering the budding engineers an eagle eye view of the live construction site, while the VR visualisation provided the students with the opportunity to gain a 3D perspective for what the new station will look like.



Design activities concentrating on generating ideas for the future of active travel were also carried out at the Ulster University and Queens

University Belfast campuses, the results of which will be submitted to the Department for Infrastructure to inform the development of Northern Ireland's new suite of Transport Plans.

The CIHT Northern Ireland Region would like to extend its sincere thanks for all of those who collaborated to make this unique event happen, including the events sponsors, Northstone (NI) Ltd.

If you are interested in getting involved in the EPG, please get in touch with Kris Campbell at [regions@CIHT.org.uk](mailto:regions@CIHT.org.uk).

### Recently Qualified TPP 2022

Many congratulations to Celine Daly of RPS, a Tetra Tech Company, recently Chartered Transport Planning Professional (CTPP).



### A bit about you

I am a Technical Director within the Highways, Civils & Transportation section of the RPS Belfast office.

Since joining RPS in 2001, I have over 22 years' experience in all aspects of transport planning, engineering and consultancy. I have worked extensively in the field of preparation and progression of transport-related deliverables for planning submissions and providing Expert

Witness services. I am also responsible for procuring and managing call-off contracts for large governmental and private frameworks such as the DfI Major Roads Works Framework (NI), Dublin Port Environmental & Planning Framework (ROI) and North Ayrshire Council Consulting Services Active Travel Framework (Scotland).

#### Why did you decide to become professionally qualified?

We have a lot of tenders that come in asking for the involvement of a Chartered Transport Planning Professional (CTPP). While I'm a member of CIHT, Transport Planning Society (TPS) and a Fellow of the Chartered Institution of Logistics and Transportation (FCILT), I've had times when I couldn't be put on a tender because I didn't have CTPP, and that was heart-wrenching.

When I started in this industry 23 years ago, transport planning was seen as the 'poor cousin' of engineering, and one of the things I wanted to do was to realign that. I wanted to show the young transport planners coming in that there is a route to chartership which is totally on par with, and as legitimate as the route to chartership engineers.

I want my CTPP to show the younger ones that there is an established route to chartership and a way to demonstrate their expertise in the industry. And on a personal note, I don't want my name removed from any more tenders because I don't meet the criteria. It's something that I've wanted for a long time, so I'm just delighted to get it.

#### How did you find the process?

I decided that the route I wanted to take was to go standard route with one of the CTPP approved Masters as a prerequisite. Hence, despite already being a Fellow of CILT, I undertook a 5-year process, spending 3 years

gaining a Masters with Distinction in Transport Planning and Engineering from Edinburgh Napier University and then 2 years working towards CTPP Standard Route Portfolio of Evidence, with my RPS Mentors.

The staff in the CIHT Education and Qualifications department were extremely helpful and supportive throughout the process.

#### How it feels to have achieved it

My 5-year plan, devised in 2018, was quite a commitment on top of my workload, so I'm so delighted to have successfully achieved CTPP and feel it has been the perfect milestone ending to that 5-year process and worth all the effort.

#### **Recently Qualified CEng 2023**

Many congratulations to Holly Graham from Department for Infrastructure, recently Chartered Engineer (CEng).

#### A bit about you

I started in the Department for Infrastructure when I was 18 as a Trainee Civil Engineer Assistant.

#### Why did you decide to become professionally qualified?

I watched several colleagues go through the Chartership process throughout my career and I always had that in mind for myself as I gathered experience from each of my roles. I had been thinking about going through the qualification myself probably for the last 3 years to help with my career progression and knew I would need to do the Individual Route, but my perception of the process was that it would be quite difficult and time intensive and to be honest- I just kept putting it off until I finally decided in 2022 it was time to do it.



### How did you find the process?

I kicked off the process with the initial assessment and got the ball rolling. I was very surprised to see how straight forward and clear the process was online, for someone who would obsess over how a report is presented aesthetically, not having to worry about that, having the standard online template where I just had to get my content in and the report was generated, I found it be much quicker and one less thing to worry about.

### How it feels to have achieved it

When I got the outcome email to say I was Chartered as I absolutely delighted... and relieved! I am so glad I started the conversations with the Education Team. I hope that having this qualification will help me progress in my career and that I can encourage colleagues to go through the process themselves.

### **Are you thinking about getting professionally qualified?**

Within CIHT NI, we are very supportive of our members becoming professionally qualified at all levels within their career. We have a number of local Professional Reviewers and Mentors who can provide advice and guidance locally.

Each year, we run a lunchtime seminar on professional qualifications, with our last event held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024, with a good turnout to hear a Reviewer's perspective from Philip Robinson and from two recently qualified candidates in Emma Dorman from Amey and Celine Daly from RPS.

Did you know that we offer routes to the following professional qualifications:

- Chartered Engineer (CEng)
- Chartered Transport Planning Professional (CTPP)

- Incorporated Engineer (IEng)
- Engineering Technician (EngTech)
- Certificate of Competency (Society of Road Safety Auditors)



Sometimes the hardest thing is getting started so get in touch if you are thinking about it. If we have enough candidates at professional review, we can quite often hold the reviews in Northern Ireland or remotely over Microsoft Teams so that they are convenient.

### **Would you support CIHT members as a Mentor or Professional Reviewer?**

Are you already professionally qualified and advanced in your career? Would you be interested in becoming a local Mentor or a Professional Reviewer for CIHT? Go to the CIHT website for more details:

[Mentoring with CIHT | CIHT](#)

### **Member Upgrades 2023**

Congratulations to Callum Donald from AtkinRealis and Noel O'Neill from the Department for Infrastructure, who were elected as Fellows of the Institution in 2023. Fellow (FCIHT) is the highest grade of membership of the Institution and is conferred on those working in highways and transportation with proven ability who have made a significant contribution to their profession.

### **CIHT 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The inaugural meeting of the Northern Ireland Branch (as it was before changing to Region) took place on 11th November 1964, which means that 2024 will mark our 60th anniversary. This year our Annual Dinner will be a celebration

of our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To mark the occasion, we are intending to develop a multimedia presentation to highlight the many successful highways and transportation projects that have been delivered in the Region over the past 60 years and indeed mark the contribution of local Northern Ireland companies in delivering these projects.

## Recruitment

CIHT has over 13,000 members working worldwide in the highways and transportation sector.

In Northern Ireland we are always looking to grow our membership. As a member of CIHT you will have access to many benefits including networking and social events, CPD opportunities and access to professional qualifications.

We have many grades of membership including apprentice, graduate, associate, member and fellow – further details are found on our membership pages of the CIHT website.

[Become a Member \(ciht.org.uk\)](http://www.ciht.org.uk)

If you are an existing member – have you thought about upgrading your membership grade to reflect your career aspirations?

## Forthcoming Events

Our 2023/24 programme has now been finalised. Further details of all our upcoming events can be found on our webpage [www.ciht.org.uk/ni](http://www.ciht.org.uk/ni) and on social media sites.

We update the sites regularly with details of events so make sure to follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn to get the latest information.

## Obituary William McCoubrey FCIHT

CIHT is sad to announce the death of William McCoubrey.

William (Billy to many) McCoubrey FCIHT was President of the Institution between 1998 - 1999, becoming only the second President from Northern Ireland.



*L – R: Geoff Allister, Past President 2010-11; Billy McCoubrey, Past President 1998-99; Steve Rowsell CIHT President 2016-17; Ronnie Porter, Past President 2002-03 at CIHT NI Gala Dinner, March 2017*

Billy first joined IHT as the Institution was then known in 1972. He became a committee member of CIHT Northern Ireland in 1976 and was Chair from 1985 / 6. He held many roles within CIHT including the Executive Board, Council, Highways and Infrastructure and Membership Boards. He was first coopted to PIARC (formerly the World Road Association in 1995 and retained an active interest in this organisation.

A Chartered Engineer, Billy was also a fellow of ICE, IHE Ireland and was admitted to the Freedom of the Worshipful Company of Paviers in June 1998. He was very active with the Paviers and embraced every aspect including editing the Paviers' Review for two stints over a number of years and acting as the Paviers' photographer for at least twenty years.

Billy graduated from Queen's University in Civil Engineering in 1960. He joined the County

Surveyor's Office Department at Down County Council. Roles included New Roads Construction and responsibility for the Materials Testing Station over the next 13 years. He transferred to Roads Service of the Department of the Environment upon the reorganisation of Local Government in Northern Ireland in October 1973.

Throughout his career, Billy held a variety of posts including maintenance and minor improvements, the development and implementation of a Northern Ireland wide Radio Telephone System for the Roads Service and contributed significantly to the development and adoption of new materials and technology throughout Roads Service, including the early electronic communications systems now so common in all our lives. He served for 8 years as the Divisional Roads Manager in the Craigavon Division before earning a promotion to Chief Engineer with responsibility for Professional and Technical Standards throughout the Roads Service. Billy became Director of the Roads Service in 1995 and through this role became Chief Executive in 1996. Billy retired from this role in 1999.

Billy remained incredibly active within CIHT and the wider sector. He continued to be involved with CIHT Northern Ireland and had been a recent member of the Membership Board and the Transportation Professional Editorial Panel.

Billy's leisure interests included Rotary (member of the Belfast Club), photography, travel, music and hill walking. He will be missed greatly by all at CIHT and everyone who knew him in the wider highways and transportation industry.

## CIHT NI Committee 2023/24

The Committee for 2023/24 was elected at the AGM in May 2023. Details of our current committee can be found at the **"Who's Who"** section of the Northern Ireland pages on [www.ciht.org.uk/ni](http://www.ciht.org.uk/ni).

We are always on the lookout for new members to keep us fresh, focused and relevant to our membership. We look to include a broad representation from across the relevant sectors – central and local government, private sector consultancy and contractors and academia.

If you are interested in giving some of your time to further CIHT in Northern Ireland, have ideas on topics you would like covered in future events or would like to give feedback on what CIHT NI are doing, please do get in touch.

## Contacts

General queries: [regions@ciht.org.uk](mailto:regions@ciht.org.uk)

Region website: [www.ciht.org.uk/ni](http://www.ciht.org.uk/ni)

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