

PRESS RELEASE

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New All-Party Parliamentary Group for Excellence in the Built Environment

The new All-Party Parliamentary Group for Excellence in the Built Environment was formally launched at the Construction Industry Council's annual summer reception, held at the Institution of Civil Engineers on 7 July.

The Chairman of the new Group, Tony Baldry MP - a former Department of the Environment Minister responsible for construction - announced that the Group's first act will be to establish a Commission on Excellence in the Built Environment, which will comprise Members of both Houses of Parliament, leaders of the professions and industry groups in membership of CIC and several independent contributors who will, he said, "challenge ideas, thinking and Expectation from outside the Parliamentary and construction boxes".

Launching the new Group and Commission, Mr Baldry said that "given the country's national indebtedness, the Government understandably is going to have concerns about affordability of building projects and clearly is going to want to look at what can be done to achieve best value for money". For this reason, he indicated that the first enquiry for the Commission would be to look at how "on the one hand, we ensure good value for money, for public spending and public procurement of construction, and on the other hand, seek to achieve Excellence in the Built Environment".

The All-Party Parliamentary Group's primary remit will be to present an holistic, cohesive, over-arching view from all sectors of demand, planning, designing, constructing, managing and maintaining the built environment and its external landscape. It will seek to work closely with other All-Party groups representing particular sectors of the built environment, such as architecture & planning, climate change, infrastructure, building, highway maintenance and gas safety.

The principal guest at the event was Mark Prisk MP - the Coalition Government's Minister of State for Business and the CIC's host was the Rt Hon Nick Raynsford, also a former Minister responsible for construction.

The reception provided an opportunity for many new MPs from each of the main political parties to meet leaders of the built environment professions.

At the Reception, the CIC Chief Executive, Graham Watts said "we communicated with many prospective parliamentary candidates in the run-up to the Election in promoting our manifesto for the Built Environment. It was very evident that none really understood the extent and inter-connectivity of the built environment and industries. They talked about the housing industry or landscape or civil engineering as if they were entirely isolated from one another and that fragmentation is the industry's weakness. The new Group is an attempt to engage parliamentarians and other serious commentators in looking at the big strategic issues, affecting the built environment, which impact upon the lives of every constituent."

Notes to the editor

1. CIC is the representative forum for the professional bodies, research organisations and specialist trade associations in the construction industry. It provides a single voice for professionals in all sectors of the built environment through its collective membership of 500,000 individual professionals and 25,000 firms of construction consultants.
2. Mark Prisk has been MP for Hertford and Stortford since 2001 and has been Minister of State for Business at the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills since the Election, having shadowed this post in Opposition since 2005
3. Tony Baldry has been MP for Banbury since 1983 and was a Minister from 1990-97, including four years at the Department of the Environment (1990-94)
4. The Rt Hon Nick Raynsford MP has been MP for Greenwich/Greenwich & Woolwich since 1992 and was a Minister from 1997-2005, including four years as the Minister responsible for construction (1997-2001). He was Chairman of the Construction Industry Council from 2006-08 and Chairman of the Strategic Forum for Construction from 2008-10. He remains an Honorary Vice-Chairman of CIC
5. Copies of Tony Baldry's speech can be found on the CIC website <http://www.cic.org.uk/pr/>

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