

# THE MCA AWARDS 2020

 THE TIMES CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR



Global impact: Arup consultant Louise Ellis helps cities and communities to be water resilient

## Shelter from the storm

Cities around the world face life or death water supply decisions due to extreme weather – cue top civil engineer and consultant Louise Ellis

**G**rowing up in Cardiff, Louise Ellis had a passion for maths and science. At the age of 16 she wrote to engineering consultants Arup on the off-chance of lining up some work experience. Their reply would change her career path. “They said yes!” Ellis says. “As a summer student, I was exposed to amazing projects such as the Severn Barrage.”

Now a chartered civil engineer, Ellis leads project teams of water specialists at Arup and is well respected for rolling up her sleeves working with cities and water utilities to find solutions. She has lived and worked in New York and the UK, and taken on projects in Panama, South Africa, Vietnam and Israel, and is globally recognised as a pre-eminent thought leader on water resilience. “A water resilient city is one that can survive and thrive in

the face of a sudden event – like a flood – or longer-term trends such as population growth or drought. It’s about a city being able to respond to too much or too little water or polluted water.”

The Covid-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of accessible and resilient water supply for hand-washing and hygiene across the world, she says. “I’ve worked with talented teams to protect the New York subway from flooding and improve water supply resilience in Cape Town. Helping Welsh Water meet its customers’ expectations in the face of climate change is a project I’m particularly proud of.”

Ellis believes the best way to explain her work is in “storytelling and bringing the numbers to life”.

“Talking in billions of dollars is unfathomable,” she says, “but queuing for water during a drought or leaving your home because of floods and the impact of missed work and stress are relatable.”

“When I share experiences of the potential consequences of the ‘Day Zero’ drought in Cape Town, or the impact of Hurricane Sandy

in New York, they impact on everyday lives, which people can really appreciate.”

With some 2 billion new urban residents estimated by 2050, there is a need for reliable essential water services across the world. Arup’s City Water Resilience Approach, to which Ellis contributed a major part, is designed to help cities anticipate and mitigate water-related shocks.

“It’s about bringing together everyone who has a role to play in the water cycle to develop collaborative solutions.”

Ellis was recognised in Forbes’ 30 under 30 for her work on water resilience, and she sees her job being in greater demand. “The rising frequency and intensity of extreme weather means we have to prepare and plan for the future. Countries need to think about nature-based solutions to use the resources we have wisely. We should mainstream resilience in the planning and implementation of water systems to provide reliable and sustainable water and wastewater services and protect communities from flooding.”

 PROJECT OF THE YEAR

## A capital idea for learning

The Met invests in impactful development for its top 10,000 leaders to equip them with more inclusive behaviours and the skills to deal with London’s ever evolving policing challenges

What do police officers face on a daily basis? “Utmost uncertainty,” says Robin Wilkinson, the Metropolitan Police’s Chief of Corporate Services who, with EY and their partners, in particular Lane4, have guided one of the most ambitious leadership development programmes undertaken by a public body.

“Every single officer going out on the streets of London today has no idea what they’re going to be faced with,” he says. “Whether we need to mobilise to protests, to terrorist incidents, to homicides, to a member of the public in distress...”

In 2017 the Met’s leadership took the decision – itself fraught with difficulty – to set aside £10 million of public money to develop and train 10,000 busy officers and police staff. Set against a backdrop of budgetary constraints and growing scrutiny, Wilkinson says the investment was a critical one, necessary to advance their unyielding intent to be a more inclusive, empowered and accountable police service. “There are so many things that are positive about the culture of the Met. But life is getting more complex and crime is too. We needed to be able to keep pace with that.”

He adds that officers and staff wanted the empowerment they had on the streets to be mirrored internally and developing a more involving and inclusive style of leadership was key to achieving that.

Kate Bamford, the client service

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When humans aren’t fast enough  
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The start of a crucial debate  
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See like a three-year-old with VR  
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Help is here via ‘the perfect week’  
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**Tamzen Isacsson**  
CEO of MCA

# Q&A

The consultancy sector has been in demand following Covid-19 as firms scramble to work remotely – but it is well placed to cope with lockdown and able to help affected businesses

## We're in the middle of a global pandemic, what are the risks and opportunities for the consultancy sector?

Management consultants are the experts that businesses turn to in times of crisis. And due to the lockdown, this has been one of the most intense periods of activity experienced by our sector. The pace of digital change has been dramatic – and our members have been supporting both the private and public sectors with crisis response, supplier risk management, digital business delivery models and scenario planning. As an early adopter of remote working, the consultancy industry has been well positioned to assist clients in moving workforces from physical to virtual spaces. Beyond all of this, we must not forget that the coronavirus continues to take an enormous human toll – on individuals, families and society.

Consultancy firms are making huge efforts to support the welfare of their employees, assisting staff through mental wellbeing programmes during this extraordinary period.

## Will we see a slew of entries linked to Covid-19 work in the 2021 Awards?

While a few “business as usual” contracts and major business transformations were paused by clients in response to the pandemic, we saw new Covid-19 related projects being launched, many of them urgent. Our industry has assisted government and businesses with critical work during this period, but it has typically been on highly confidential projects. That said, important work has included assisting banks in setting up thousands of employees for remote working, helping to create new

government support schemes, processing grants to protect jobs and keep firms in business; and providing support in building the seven Nightingale hospitals. Perhaps we will be able to recognise some of these efforts in the Awards next year.

## The world will likely not be the same as it was before the crisis. What does this mean for the consultancy sector?

The new normal will see far more remote working than before. We have proved, to ourselves and our clients, that we can deliver on projects and achieve end goals without physically being on site. Remote working will also give clients access to a wider pool of consultants from different regions, and this in turn will bring even greater competition and diversity. Likewise, the new arrangements will positively benefit consultants who need more flexibility in their working lives. Consultancy firms are learning to be even more agile, gaining experience in adapting quickly to crisis opportunities and assisting clients with business resilience.

## How has the MCA supported its members through this period?

Since the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic in the UK, the MCA has been focused on offering new member services, including lockdown-specific webinars and briefings. These have included sessions with government ministers and representatives from the Bank of England,

# 49%

of consultants are women

# 74,000

people work in consultancy

# 1,188

new trainees, apprentices and school leavers in 2019

# £11bn

the estimated worth of the sector in the UK\*

and we've hosted some 70 guest speakers online. At times of crisis, a trade association should be a focal point for its industry. We've been in a position to help a diversity of firms share best practice on crucial issues from mental wellbeing to leading with disruption.

## What have been the challenges in making the Awards event digital?

The health of our members, judges, clients and guests has been our primary concern, and this virtual event is in response to social distancing guidelines. We have had support from our members and sponsors, but there have certainly been challenges. Delivering speeches with no audience was harder than we expected! I hope we can host the Awards ceremony in person next year, as it gives our sector a rare opportunity to get together and celebrate our achievements.

## What are your plans for next year's awards ceremony?

All being well, we are planning for the MCA Awards to return to the usual format next year, with the ceremony and dinner taking place on November 1, 2021. The timetable will be announced in due course, but we will be extending the deadline for entries in order to give member firms more time to plan and prepare.

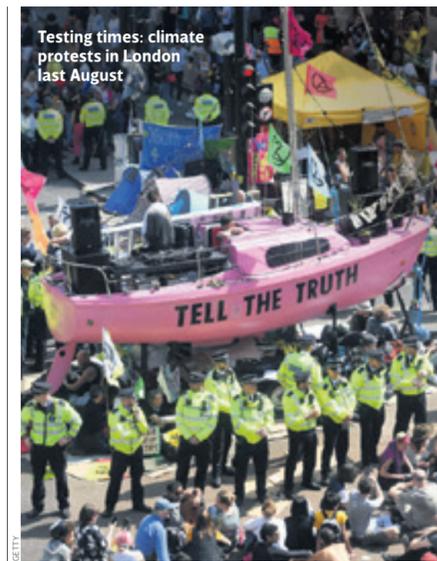
You can find out more at [mca.org.uk](http://mca.org.uk)  
\*Source (all): MCA Annual Report, Savanta

## FROM FRONT PAGE

provider for EY – one of the organisations that worked with the Met on Leading for London – says delivering the programme over a short timescale presented a logistical challenge for a 45,000-strong organisation. “How do you get them out of a day job protecting London, into the right classrooms at the right time?”

EY and their partners, including Lane4, Clarity 4D and Engageworks, created an integrated learning experience using coaching, workshops, simulations and summits. The programme was “very much a blend of classroom and digital learning”, allowing busy officers to balance their learning and their duties. “This was supported by an easy to navigate website that would help them manage their learner journey,” says Bamford. Over the course of the programme more than 200 people contributed with 150 Met staff, including an accredited faculty of 100 Met facilitators and coaches. “We worked together to design this as a behaviour and culture change programme. It wasn't just a series of learning interventions,” she adds.

EY drew on its network of suppliers such as Lane4, experts in people performance, and Clarity4D, in personality profiling. The colour-themed personality profiles, explored through one-to-one coaching, helped Met leaders better understand different communication and leadership styles and learn to flex their approach and form inclusive teams. Everyone from



Testing times: climate protests in London last August

sergeants right up to the commissioner herself made personal pledges to sustain positive behaviours and team pledges to use transformative leadership in their units to drive culture change and better performance at all levels. They were accompanied by green and red card behaviours that reminded leaders of their collective commitment to behave and act in the right way.

“I was clear that this was not training that was done to the Met,” says Wilkinson. “It was training that was done *with* and using great people from within the Met. That was powerful, in terms of us being able to say, ‘You're not being lectured at by people who know nothing about your culture.’”

Bamford also adds: “One key factor was working with such a committed senior leader in Robin and a board who were 100 per cent behind this.”

During 2017, the capital suffered from several terrorist attacks. “We ran this programme during some really tough times in London,” Wilkinson says. The programme had been set to last 18 months. But based on feedback, it now forms a key part of the Met's curriculum for new leaders.

LFL achieved promoter scores of 95 per cent for coaching and more than 80 per cent for workshops, meaning staff would recommend the experience to a colleague. “Better performance outcomes deliver stronger public confidence in the service,” says Bamford.

Wilkinson adds: “If people are feeling more engaged, more motivated, our people are more likely to intervene and help others.” He, along with the Met's wider leadership team, sees Leading for London as a catalyst that drove deep change in their behaviour and skills.

He continues: “We believe passionately in an inclusive and just society and workplace for all and we're on a journey to proactively drive positive change in our own organisation and across London.” **JC**

# Deloitte.

To help business and society thrive we start with our people.



Congratulations and thank you to all of our 2020 MCA Award winners and finalists. Helping us make an impact that matters.

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

# Rewriting the code for tech's male firewall

Through her 'IT's Her Future' strategy, KPMG's Anna Somaiya brings women into a sector once dominated by men

**I** am a proud IT techie,” declares Anna Somaiya. She remembers the moment her love of technology was born. “My father brought home a chunky laptop and I was absolutely fascinated by it. He said this machine was going to change the world! I knew I had to be involved in something that important.”

After studying IT and business studies, she joined carmaker Honda as a junior project engineer. Over two decades, Somaiya has worked largely across the value chain in manufacturing, R&D, Formula 1 racing and sales, where she spent four years leading technology across EMEA.

She joined KPMG in 2015 as a senior manager in CIO advisory, where she took the opportunity

to become people leader to further understand KPMG's business operations. She was quickly promoted to IT transformation director, leading the firm's digital transformation.

“When I joined in 2015 there were few female role models in senior jobs,” she says, “and I saw a decline in women at middle and senior management as many of those who went on maternity leave didn't return.”

In a male-dominated sector, Somaiya has encountered discrimination. “During my earlier career in particular, I was often the only woman in the room. I found that being taken seriously was tricky, and my opinions were often dismissed or overshadowed,” she explains.

“I would walk into board meetings and have a strong feeling of self-doubt. In order to compensate I would work extra hard and overprepare for meetings in order to be taken seriously.”

Only 17 per cent of the tech



Time to act: techie Anna Somaiya is getting more women into her industry

workforce is female, “an unacceptable state of affairs”, Somaiya adds.

A fundamental rewiring was needed in the way women at KPMG were recruited and mentored in their careers. “It was time to act. I wrote the strategy for 'IT's Her Future' [IHF], presenting it to the board in 2016.”

IHF has transformed the culture within KPMG. Mentoring had helped Somaiya in her career,

and through the IHF programme she increased the number of mentees from 30 to 300.

The second workstream Somaiya set up focused on experienced hires, to engage with talented women whom internal recruiters might not reach.

“We performed an end-to-end audit of the recruitment process and found that large companies such as KPMG tended to say, ‘We want the best,’ and, ‘Come and join the best team’ – women often find such language off-putting,” she says. “We completely revamped the job description template to ensure it used ‘growth mindset language’.”

The success of IT's Her Future saw the percentage of female graduates in technology at KPMG in the UK rise from 35 per cent in 2015 to 52 per cent in 2020, with experienced hires also growing from 26 to 42 per cent.

Somaiya strongly believes that “diversity is not just a construct designed to right an imbalance – it's an untapped superpower that all businesses can access”, which led her to work with clients to develop their own diversity initiatives and drive change externally. IT's Her Future has further expanded to tackle Stem disengagement. “If we get our children exposed to technology earlier it will no longer be about girl jobs and boy jobs,” she says.

“It's about ensuring we have the right mix of people to bring success to the business,” Somaiya concludes. “I am committed to ensuring gender parity across all grades within technology professions and we won't be satisfied until it happens.” **JC**

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## Thin blue line crack the bottom line in Beds

Consultancy paved the way for underfunded police force to reinvest £7 million raised through savings

**I**n 2018, Bedfordshire Police faced what it could euphemistically describe as a “challenging operational context”. Within striking distance of London, Bedfordshire faces a tough mix of organised criminals, youth violence and a high terror threat. It also had one of the most underfunded forces in the country. Management consultants were brought in to look at all facets of policing and bring a targeted external challenge, to support the inevitable tough calls that the

force’s leaders would have to make. “We struggle with our budget,” says Michelle Leggetter, a project manager at Bedfordshire Police. “Spending money on consultants when we didn’t have enough officers or resources was a great challenge politically inside the force.” So how did hard-bitten coppers react? “If you’re a police officer and you haven’t got a car, then you see consultants come in, you ask questions. Getting the message across that we needed to do this was the biggest issue. There will

always be some pushback, but we were open about costs.” Andrew Newsham, who leads the bulk of PwC’s police work, led the response. “Saying to frontline cops, ‘What makes your job more difficult than it needs to be?’ is a good starting point. ‘What would you change? Why don’t we work out what impact that change would have?’ “We looked at 70 per cent of all the work the force undertook – everything from public protection to dealing with serious violence.



Tough calls: Bedfordshire Police transformed its spending

“Then we asked some fundamental questions: what services are provided? How much do they cost? What value do the public get from those services?” Bedfordshire deals with all the current national issues. Problems stemming from county lines – in which drug gangs expand their operations from big cities to smaller towns – feature prominently. Teens often find themselves on the streets dealing drugs. This unfortunately leads to serious youth violence. Miten Khatri, a manager at PwC, became embedded with the force, analysing them from the front line. “One was a detective, the other a uniformed officer,” Khatri says, adding, “Their guards were up when we started.” However, “Four months later the detective inspector would come to me with questions like, ‘Why are we focusing on things like this in this criminal investigation team? Let’s reinvest it into a more urgent priority.’ He changed.” With a savings target of £3 million, Bedfordshire Police ultimately released £7 million, from £70 million spending. “This wasn’t just about identifying savings,” says Newsham. “This was about helping the force identify the savings while ensuring the remaining resources were prioritised to ensure that the public remain protected.”

## Change that creates value

As a leader, you’re always thinking about change. Whether modernising, refining, or completely transforming what you do, you want to create value for the people and communities who matter most in your world.

Congratulations to all our MCA 2020 Finalists and Winners

**Change and Transformation in the Private Sector (Winner)**

**Data and Innovation in the Private Sector (Winner)**

**Performance Improvement in the Public Sector (Winner)**

**Team Leader Consultant of the Year (Winner)**

Best Use of Thought Leadership (Highly Commended)

Best New Apprentice (Highly Commended)

Outstanding Achievement (Highly Commended)

Change and Transformation in the Public Sector, International, Young Consultant of the Year, Rising Star (Finalists).



# Starling Bank flies ever higher

It shook up a sector in a digital rut by utilising AI and machine learning. Parminder Bahra asks what's next for this new kid on the banking block

**D**isruption in banking is more synonymous with financial crashes than the digital variety. For decades the sector was dominated by a handful of banks and consumers showed little appetite for change. For Starling Bank CEO Anne Boden, this was an opportunity for digital disruption. "After 30 years in everybody else's banks, I concluded that we needed a new one," she says.

In 2014 Boden quit and turned to PwC for help to fulfil her ambition of shaking up the banking sector. It was an "audacious goal" back then. "I didn't have a team, any premises or any money," says Boden. "I spent a lot of my time sitting in the client lounge of PwC. That's how Starling started."

The plan was to create a neobank using the kind of technology found among start-ups in Silicon Valley.

Six years on, the bank has more than £1 billion in deposits, a million customers and a thriving service for



Smart money: 'Big banks release new software every three months – we do five a day'

businesses and the self-employed.

"We had grown used to a service from our banks that, to be honest, is much the same as it was 20 years ago, plus an app," says Steve Davies, a partner at PwC who worked with Boden when Starling was set up.

"Customers want the experience they get throughout the digital space in their lives," he says. At Starling, this means the use of AI and machine learning to develop novel products and offerings. It allows, says Boden, for an account to be opened and operational in three

minutes, subject to checks, and fraud and filtering processes. They've had customers open an account while queuing to board a plane, to benefit from their foreign exchange deals.

There's a frantic pace at which new products are released. With an agile approach – intense bursts by multidisciplinary teams – products are created and launched in days.

"How long it takes you to think of something and code it is how long it takes you to launch," says Darshan Chandarana, another PwC partner who worked with Boden on Starling.

"Big banks probably do a new release of software once every three months; we do five releases a day on a slow day," adds Boden.

And there's Starling Marketplace, where third parties can integrate Starling's products into their own services through its application programming interface (API). "Everything we have is available through an API," says Boden.

Starling has already been recognised for its work – winning a £100 million grant from a fund set up after the 2008 crash to increase competition in banking services for small and medium-sized firms.

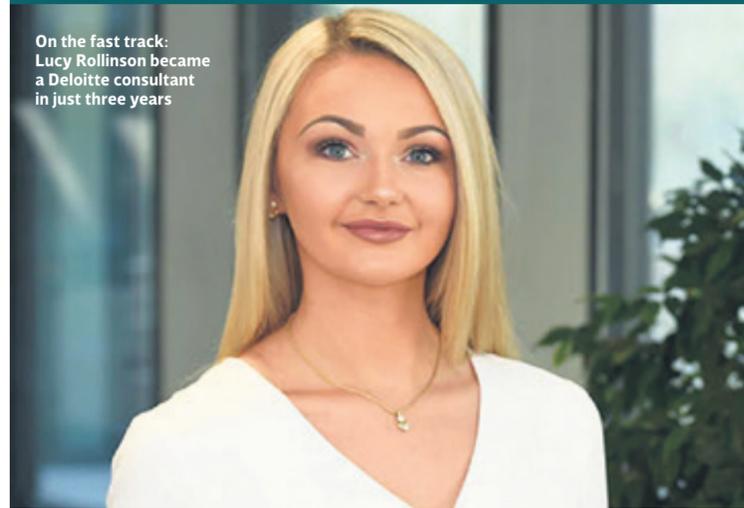
It picked up Best British Bank for the third year running at the 2020 British Bank Awards; now to that it adds the MCA Award for Data and Innovation in the Private Sector.

Starling's work with PwC is symbiotic. "You need skill to partner and use consultancies effectively," says Boden. "An organisation that feels it can outsource or buy in either its intellect or vision is not going to be successful."

Boden is proud that Starling has a relationship with a big consultancy, which, she says, is unusual in a tech start-up. "I think that has allowed us to be able to take on the big boys."

## BEST NEW APPRENTICE

On the fast track: Lucy Rollinson became a Deloitte consultant in just three years



# Next generation apprenticeships

Bypassing university allowed one young starter to excel in digital development. She encourages others to follow suit

**L**ucy Rollinson, a high-flying member of Deloitte's robotic and intelligent automation team (R&IA), shows how consultancies are broadening their talent pools – and unearthing the industry's next rising stars in the process.

Having completed her A levels, Rollinson decided university wasn't her best option. She thought an apprenticeship rather than further education was a better move.

"I felt a certain amount of pressure to go down the university route," Rollinson explains. "It didn't come from friends, family or school – it was more of a social expectation."

"But I wasn't exactly sure what I wanted to do in my career and I didn't think university would allow me to explore different options."

Deloitte's BrightStart higher apprenticeship programme is aimed at "curious, smart people" to earn-while-you-learn and gain a professional qualification.

For Rollinson, the opportunity was a no-brainer. "Consulting seemed like the perfect industry for me as every day is different. I would be able to learn on the go, try out different industries and get involved in a range of projects to find what I wanted to focus my career on."

"Plus I could gain professional qualifications at the same time, which was really appealing."

There's also the opportunity cost of lost salary, and fees and loans associated with a university degree.

It is safe to say that Rollinson has not looked back. "I have had the chance to work with incredible clients and people within Deloitte.

In addition, I've had fantastic experiences including global travel, attending professional events and gaining multiple qualifications."

Starting your career at 18 for a huge firm might have seemed like a daunting prospect, but Rollinson's experience has been purely positive.

"Deloitte treats apprentices brilliantly," she says. "It provides an excellent support network."

Within the R&IA team, Rollinson works with private sector clients to develop their understanding of what automation can bring. She has helped to develop a tool called Digital Pipeline, which allows organisations to track and quantify automation projects they have worked on.

Now aged 22, she has been promoted to consultant within three years instead of the usual four, has delivered a business analyst training course for a client in India, and became Deloitte's youngest ever member on its "advanced business analyst bootcamp". She has also completed the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants certificate, become a certified "scrum master", and is studying for the Amazon Web Services Certified Cloud Practitioner qualification.

Did she ever feel that the term "apprentice" is misconceived? "When I first started, I don't think their value was fully understood as equivalent to a university degree. I think the term is more commonly linked with trade apprenticeships, mainly because professional apprenticeships are still quite new."

What's Rollinson's message to those thinking about doing an apprenticeship? "They are a great opportunity to get your foot in the door, develop strong networks and find a career that suits your skills. Apprentices are primed to learn, adapt, grow, grasp new opportunities and face challenges head on." **JC**

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## MCA 2020 award winners and highly commended

### BEST USE OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

**Winner**  
Arup with Bernard van Leer Foundation and Real Play Coalition  
**Highly commended**  
Deloitte  
PwC with Microsoft

### CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

**Winner**  
PwC with Standard Life International  
**Highly commended**  
Vendigital with Newsprinters

### CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

**Winner**  
IBM with Scottish government  
**Highly commended**  
CF with Isle of Wight NHS Trust  
KPMG with Nursing and Midwifery Council

### COMMERCIAL EXCELLENCE

**Winner**  
Arcadis with Southern Water  
**Highly commended**  
Vendigital with Bombardier Transportation

### DATA AND INNOVATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

**Winner**  
PwC with Starling Bank  
**Highly commended**  
KPMG with HSBC

### DATA AND INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

**Winner**  
BAE Systems Applied Intelligence with Royal Navy  
**Highly commended**  
Cognizant Consulting with the FA

### INTERNATIONAL

**Winner**  
Arup with Department for International Trade

### PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

**Winner**  
BearingPoint with Slater Gordon

### PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

**Winner**  
PwC with Bedfordshire Police  
**Highly commended**  
BearingPoint with Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust  
IBM with DWP Digital

### PEOPLE

**Winner**  
EY with the Metropolitan Police Service

### SOCIAL VALUE

**Winner**  
Deloitte with Helpforce

### STRATEGY

**Winner**  
Decision Technology with BT Group  
**Highly commended**  
EY with EDF

### INDIVIDUALS

#### YOUNG CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

**Winner**  
Anju Jacob, Deloitte  
**Highly commended**  
Lewis McCormack, Arcadis  
Mei Yan Pun, EY  
Andrew Brough, Vendigital

#### BEST NEW APPRENTICE

**Winner**  
Lucy Rollinson, Deloitte  
**Highly commended**  
Samuel Imie, Deloitte  
Humaid Motala, PwC

#### RISING STAR

**Winner**  
Holly Armitage, BAE Systems  
Applied Intelligence  
**Highly commended**  
Ysabel Brown, Arcadis  
Laila Takeh, Deloitte  
Josh Hasdell, KPMG

#### TEAM LEADER CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

**Winner**  
Emma Booth, PwC  
**Highly commended**  
Laura Flynn, EY  
Paul Rees Jones, EY

#### INNOVATION CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

**Winner**  
Jonny Stephens, BearingPoint  
**Highly commended**  
Tyler Welms, Deloitte

#### THOUGHT LEADER CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

**Winner**  
Louise Ellis, Arup

#### OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

**Winner**  
Anna Somaiya, KPMG  
**Highly commended**  
Ally Robson, NECS Consultancy  
Andy Woodfield, PwC

### OVERALL

#### BEST NEW CONSULTANCY

**Winner**  
JCURV  
**Highly commended**  
Arca Blanca  
Procura

#### THE TIMES CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR

**Winner**  
Louise Ellis, Arup

#### PROJECT OF THE YEAR

**Winner**  
EY with the Metropolitan Police Service

DATA AND INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

# Big data helps defence stay light on its fleet

The Royal Navy and BAE Systems deploy AI to meet the alarming threat of 'machine-speed warfare'

**T**he Russians claim to have the first hypersonic missile. That's incredibly scary because if you react at human speed, it'll hit you before you've noticed."

This is Sandy Boxall, a director at BAE Systems Applied Intelligence, and a senior partner within Project Nelson – a collaborative response by the defence consultancy and the Royal Navy to "machine-speed warfare".

Nelson harnesses advanced data analytics and AI in the Royal Navy. Its priority has been to construct a "navy mind" – a common big-data platform – to be used on warships and at naval headquarters.

Bringing this technology to the navy, though, is not straightforward. "The armed forces, in general, are exceptional at training people

so that under high stress situations they respond very well," says artificial intelligence and data programme director for the Royal Navy, David Tagg-Oram, but he adds that this is not conducive to adapting disruptive technologies.

Enter BAE Systems Applied Intelligence. They were brought in to apply their expertise in data and analytics to help install a fleet-wide, big data layer to transform the analytical capability of a ship's systems by making all appropriate data available in one environment.

The scale of the project is not lost on Boxall. "You're talking about changing a 30,000-person supply chain and organisation. That takes a long time if you're influencing tens of individuals at a time. You start small and it gradually expands.

"Within the next two years Nelson will be on every main type of ship and in every business area." It's a task made more difficult when you consider that server rooms didn't even exist when some of these ships were designed.



Shipshape: rolling out new systems across such a vast organisation is far from simple



Putting software on to a ship took at least a year. With Nelson this has been reduced to days



GETTY

Project Nelson brings the navy into the future and takes a very different approach to the way it has operated in the past.

"One of the principles of agile software development is that at the end of each sprint, you should be able to release what you've got," says BAE Systems' head of data platform, Hannah Green.

"When we started, the process for putting digital capabilities on to a ship took at least a year. With the introduction of Nelson's agile software development approach, this has been reduced to days." The team's final target is just hours.

"That ability is going to be critical," says Boxall, "if you think about the kind of speed that you might see new threats emerging."

Aside from the operational impact, Nelson brings structural change by significantly opening the navy to a more diverse set of organisations. "There's a feeling of disbelief from SMEs about how to engage with the Ministry of Defence," says Boxall. "It's a very difficult place to go because the procurement cycles are so extensive; you have a great idea, then you convince a number of colonels that it's the best thing ever and four years later they run a competition for the very thing you suggested."

Instead, BAE Systems and the navy have deployed hackathons to bring in new skills and products at speed: "We open the hackathons wide," says Green. "We're encouraging small companies and universities to engage at that early stage so they can start thinking. 'This is an industry I can play in.'"

"Do a hackathon and you have a route to market," adds Boxall. "You're changing everything and galvanising these great minds." **PB**

INTERNATIONAL



Surefire winners: the women's volleyball final and, below, hockey preliminaries at the 2019 Lima Pan American Games

# How Lima and London let the Games begin...

Peru's hosting of last year's Pan American Games looked in serious doubt after deadly large-scale flooding. But thanks to lessons from London 2012, they ended up a runaway success

How did the Department for International Trade (DIT) help deliver one of the world's largest multisports events in Peru, some 6,000 miles away? The answer lies in the London 2012 Olympics, some eagle-eyed British diplomats and the residual experience at the consultancy Arup.

Peru had won the right to host the 2019 edition of the Pan American Games and were expecting thousands of athletes from 41 countries to compete in 39 sports. However, in 2017, the Peruvian government faced a "complex set of domestic political issues" as well as severe flooding across the country. This put the hosting of the Games in severe jeopardy.

Toronto had hosted the previous Pan-Am Games in 2015 and the Peruvians initially sought help from the Canadian government. When the British embassy in Lima got wind of this, it saw an opportunity and contacted the DIT who already had a visit to Lima planned.

Over an intensive three-month period, the UK sought help from the private sector including sports events experts 4global, and international consultancies Mace and Arup.

The CEO of the Pan-Am Games approached the UK government, sealing the deal on the first ever non-military government-to-government contract undertaken by Britain.

Nick Merridew, director of integrated city planning at Arup, explains: "Arup were invited to participate due to our experience on similar major events

around the world, such as the London Olympics, and our experience of working with the other UK consortia team members. With this, we have an understanding of all stakeholders, timelines, scope and processes of planning and delivering an event, which enables us to develop the best tailor-made solutions."

Public confidence, however, was low when Arup got on the ground in the capital Lima just 20 months ahead of the showpiece. There was a completely new organising committee and venues and stadiums still needed to be built.

Eventually a 20-strong full-time team from Arup would be based in the country "focusing on knowledge transfer and the idea of supporting



the Peruvians, rather than doing". In London, the DIT had a management group, backed up by a local team at the British embassy.

Arup were organised around two main workstreams: one was to ensure that the venues used for the Games were properly built; the other was to provide assurance on design and the delivery of temporary infrastructure.

"Our approach was always a collaborative one," says Merridew. "We never tried to dictate the rules or do the job on behalf of the Peruvians. Our offer was to work together sharing our knowledge at the same time as learning from the locals about their own experience and expectations."

"The real key to ensuring delivery was that we didn't bring an already prepared model. We, together with our other UK consortia members [Mace and 4global], developed a procurement model specific for Lima."

The Games turned out to be a huge success and are "proof of what collaborative working can achieve", says Merridew. A legacy programme, along the lines of the London 2012 Olympics, has been put in place to repurpose venues and stadiums.

The Pan-Am Games has also been great for UK firms. Michael Charlton, managing director of DIT, explains: "It generated export sales from the UK of £100 million and strengthened the UK's position in the infrastructure sector, where UK firms have won further work."

How would Arup measure the impact? "Peruvians were left with a boost in their confidence," says Merridew. "They proved that they can deliver major events and projects."

"We believe we were part of that empowerment and of that story. We all now feel a bit Peruvian as well." **JC**

# Why 'no plastic' is not so fantastic

Did the push to ban plastics go too far? It may sound like heresy but one firm is raising this complex and vital debate

When the BBC's *Blue Planet II* wildlife documentary demonstrated the effects of plastic waste on marine life, it had a dramatic and instant impact. It fed into a government consultation, a ban on plastic straws, a plastic tax and a commitment from many businesses to remove or reduce their use of plastic.

While a reaction was necessary, KPMG's Joshua Hasdell – from the responsible business strategy team – argues that "demonising" plastic went too far. "There is a role for plastic in society – we just need to use it intelligently. Yes, get rid of single use, but actually plastic is a useful material," he says.

At the other end of the supply chain

of the "Blue Planet effect" was Suez, an international waste and resource management company. After a number of retail organisations committed to plastic-free aisles in their shops, says Dr Adam Read, external affairs director at the company, "they were calling us saying, 'We've just set this policy – how do we achieve that because you guys sort, segregate and process it for us?'"

For Read, this was a case of closing the stable door after the horse had bolted. "There was a shift in the sector that was about to kick off," he says, "but there wasn't any guidance out there to say, 'hang on, before you make the decision, consider this.'"

The move to cut out plastic also failed to acknowledge that it can be recycled. According to Read, a HDPE (high-density polyethylene) plastic milk bottle – commonly found in supermarkets – is "one of the most successful examples because 75 per cent of all of those bottles end up as another bottle again and again."



'Blue Planet effect': distressing images have raised awareness over plastics

Addressing this was the genesis for KPMG's thought leadership paper, "Plastic: To Ban or Not to Ban?", which was spearheaded by Hasdell.

Suez provided an industry-perspective for the paper for which it is ideally placed as it handles significant volumes of plastic waste both from households and businesses. Read says the paper has started an important debate and is "definitely the first report

that we had been aware of that was asking the right questions."

For KPMG, it gave an "independent, brand agnostic and unbiased view to paint a picture of what happens when you switch", says Hasdell.

The report provides an understanding of the various strategies and mitigating factors available. For example, firms opting for a zero-plastic approach soon face issues if they have also committed



If you replace plastic with aluminium you'll have an environmental impact with all the new mines you open

to net zero carbon emissions. If you replace plastic with aluminium you'll have an environmental impact with all the new bauxite mines you need to open. "That's the kind of debate that has been being started with this type of report and is now more central to the sector's dialogue," says Read.

Identifying the direction of future legislation, the report raises the importance of the "circular economy". Firms will need to take greater responsibility for how their products are disposed of in the future, says Hasdell, and move away from the "take, make, waste principle".

Instead, he argues, companies need to design out waste and keep materials, "topped up every so often with new resources rather than completely excavating the world and exploiting the natural resources and then putting the waste back in the ground". **PB**

# Water under the bridge

A novel approach allowed a utilities firm and its contractors to improve teamwork and reduce costs

**R**educing construction costs, improving customer service, and carrying out effective repair and maintenance work is what all water companies and contractors strive to do. But in 2018, Southern Water and its supply chain were not where they wanted to be. Good ideas and intentions had not translated into results. “While we had all the right ingredients, our joint performance wasn’t hitting the expectations of our customers and regulators,” admits Stephen Coleman, head of procurement at Southern Water. The company is responsible for providing water and sewerage to

homes and businesses across southern England. Every five years it submits a business plan to Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) to determine the level of funding and investment it can make in the business. As part of the current planning cycle, Southern Water decided it was time to address this challenge.

“In February 2018, we engaged Arcadis to help,” explains Coleman. “The remit was to transform our construction and maintenance supply chain, and help us improve how we can work together to be more efficient – at least 20 per cent across our multibillion-pound programme. We also knew that our teams were frustrated because our previous efforts were good, but hadn’t really landed fully.”

Arcadis carried out a rapid review and analysis of the business,



Under pressure: when is a burst pipe a ‘priority one’ emergency?

engaging with Southern Water and its contractors, and bringing new ideas and experiences from other utilities and industries. “Working together, we identified how things could be improved,” explains Greg Bradley, managing director at Arcadis. “This included new ways to bundle packages of work for contractors, new commercial models for the utility and contractor to reduce costs, and new processes to help everyone collaborate.”

It also revealed many previous frustrations had been caused by misunderstanding. For example, when a water pipe bursts, a customer calls in and only if it is a critical issue should Southern Water class it “priority one”. This requires a maintenance contractor to respond urgently. But Southern Water had a tendency to assign priority one status to calls even if they were not critical. This overwhelmed the contractor, who had no way of dealing with them all in time. “Looking at the data and analysing what was going on showed that it wasn’t clear to everyone what their roles should be,” says Ipek Kaymak, a consultant at Arcadis.

There were similar examples with major construction work, where greater collaboration could improve collective understanding

and speed up design decisions. The team recognised that new solutions would only work if they all shared an understanding of the new ways of doing things – particularly when projects encountered problems.

Taking a novel approach, the lessons were captured in a board game called The Southern Water Way. It has quiz-style questions that cover the new work arrangements, and behavioural tests – if your decisions show good behaviour you move forward, but bad behaviour means you move back.

“When you describe changes with charts, it’s very dry and people don’t connect with it,” says Bradley. “But the board game has proven to be successful at all levels, even in the boardroom. It captures all the things that would cause behavioural frustration, and plays back the specific things contractors and Southern Water see as critical to long-term success.”

“The project secured contractual commitment with six industry-leading contractors, and an efficiency plan that delivers the savings required,” Bradley says. “The transformation is key to realising Southern Water’s vision to ‘create a resilient water future for customers in the south east’, with cost savings also preventing an increase to customer bills.”

## Reimagining future cities through a child’s eye

VR lets planners ‘become’ the height of a toddler, helping to transform new urban designs

In the midst of rapid population growth, the single most important aspect of our future is being left by the wayside. “Children are being designed out of cities’ streets and public spaces,” says Sara Candiracci, associate director at urban planning and engineering consultancy Arup. “Urban planners and city authorities don’t take into account the role cities play in children’s wellbeing and development.”

As streets account for up to 90 per cent of our urban public spaces, it is a timely approach. “The way we shape our cities influences a child’s brain development and behaviour,” says Candiracci. “Children not only need water, nutrition and access to health, they need opportunities to play outside, explore their neighbourhood freely, and get closer to nature.”

Arup’s report, published in 2017, draws attention to the challenges children face



Family friendly: a ‘garden city’ in Freiburg, Germany

in cities globally, and to the benefits of child-friendly urban design and planning – from the garden cities of Freiburg, in Germany, to the car-free superblocks of Barcelona. The report has already been downloaded 9,000 times, and is influencing a child-centred approach across the built environment industry.

Arup has since joined the Real Play Coalition – which includes the Lego Foundation, National Geographic, Ikea and Unicef – to help the understanding of the “play experience” in cities globally. Arup is also partnering with the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) – which supports “giving all children a good start in life” – to develop a design guide to support urban practitioners, city authorities and professionals in designing and implementing child and family-friendly interventions in informal and refugee

settlements. The project is being piloted in Cape Town (South Africa), Nairobi (Kenya), Azraq (Jordan) and Tripoli (Lebanon). BvLF also collaborated with Arup to develop the Urban95 virtual reality experience, which allows users to virtually halve in size and become 95cm tall – the average height of a three-year-old – within a fictional urban realm.

Michael Feigelson, CEO of the Van Leer Group, explains: “People can’t easily recall their experience of being a child, so we’ve been all over the world putting headsets on mayors and urban planners, to make them experience a city as a young child. The VR was designed to scare you a little, it’s got huge cars and it’s loud. It opens up a serious conversation – such as how streets are simply not designed for a three-year-old or someone in a wheelchair, but for people who walk faster.”

“We are appreciative of the steps Arup has taken towards embedding the needs of young children in their work,” Feigelson continues. “But we want to see them go further. And I think the fact that that’s even possible shows the impact.”

Felicitas zu Dohna, a senior consultant at Arup who co-wrote the report, says the researchers initially spoke to children of parents at the consultancy, but have since talked to hundreds more. Why should we listen to children? Candiracci explains: “They are more resourceful than adults think, they’re creative, they know exactly what they want and their imagination is free from barriers that normally adults have. Children should not be seen as beneficiaries of our work, but active participants in the process.” **JC**

BEST USE OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP – SPONSORED BY KIMBLE



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# Agile firms thrive in uncertainty

JCURV aims to help companies improve their speed and efficiency by taking agile working beyond IT

**S**afari tours and “walking the Gemba” are some of the techniques helping JCURV scale new heights.

The consultancy, founded in 2015, has a mission to boost the “agility” of UK PLC by taking working practices out of IT departments and into organisations as a whole.

JCURV’s managing director, Vikram Jain, explains agile working: “It allows organisations to take a complex solution and break it down into small components that can be delivered incrementally to customers every few weeks. Short feedback loops allow firms to adapt and change faster and reduce wasted investments.”

“We have applied agile working to launch new food products and banking services, increase the speed and accuracy of insurance pricing algorithms, and improve the energy efficiency in a supermarket.”

Helping companies such as Bank of Ireland, Sainsbury’s and Direct Line Group strengthen their change capability, JCURV has engaged more than 6,000 people in agile practices.

Getting company leaders to understand what this kind of work means for their own management styles is hugely important.

To bring agile working to life



Time to reflect: JCURV MD Vikram Jain says leaders must look in the mirror

JCURV runs “safaris” in which leaders go into other firms to speak to their peers. “They get a real-life understanding of the journey they will take,” says Jain.

Frank conversations are held with leadership teams – sometimes involving CEOs of FTSE 100 firms.

“In the very first step, leaders define their own principles and behaviours to manage and lead transformation,” Jain explains.

“Our role is to hold up a mirror

and create the time for them to reflect on their behaviours, celebrate progress they’ve made but also review where gaps still exist – plus the implications these are having on the delivery of value.”

With one financial services firm, the leadership group was identified as being distant, delegating the transformation effort to their delivery teams. “The CEO would rarely leave a wood-panelled office upstairs in the executive suite. So

most teams would have to go up to share progress.

“One focus in agile working is for leaders to be in the space where the work is happening, so they can see the issues and opportunities more transparently rather than having information filtered to them via reports and rumours.”

“There is a Japanese term ‘walking the Gemba’ – meaning going into the real space. So we shared the feedback with the CEO that they were operating in a bureaucratic and hierarchical way.”

In the following weeks, the CEO came downstairs and met the delivery teams. In this informal environment, both were more open and honest about the real issues they were collectively facing.

“With the CEO visibly in the delivery team’s environment, it showed them the boss valued the work they were doing. This had a huge impact on motivation.”

Indeed, employee engagement – the level of satisfaction an employee has in their role – has gone up on average by 21 per cent with JCURV’s clients. Jain attributes this to agile principles around “teams having increased autonomy, mastery and a stronger purpose”.

“We’ve made huge progress but we’ve got a lot more work to do,” he says. “We want to expand our approach to new industries, including the public sector, and further expand internationally.” **JC**

## Realising a brighter future for women and technology

Identifying new risks, delivering innovative solutions and building trust requires diverse perspectives. The better our gender balance, the better placed we’ll be to do just that.

Our solution? IT’s Her Future is an award-winning KPMG initiative tackling gender diversity within technical professions. Launching five years ago as a grassroots programme, it has since grown into a firm-wide scheme and helped boost female headcount to 42% across technology departments through mentorship, events, coaching and targeted training.

But our journey is not over. Achieving gender parity across the tech industry requires a collaborative effort, and so IT’s Her Future also support organisations with their own transformation stories to truly help change the face of technology for good.

Search ‘IT’s Her Future’ to find out more



Anna Somaiya, IT Transformation Director and Founder of IT’s Her Future



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# Smarter triage – a virtue for patients

Sorting through GP referrals takes vast amounts of time, but a new AI model at NHS Lothian allows life-threatening cases to be identified and fast-tracked

**T**riage – the system of allocating medical treatment to those most in need – was developed to cope with the wounded on the battlefields of the First World War. Now, in the third decade of the 21st century, “intelligent automated triage” has new purposes: delivering urgent care, reducing waiting lists and freeing up consultants’ time with the aid of artificial intelligence.



Improved process: AI is saving patients and GPs time without sacrificing care

NHS Lothian handles more than 5,000 new patient referrals each year in the field of gastroenterology. The board has an electronic system in which GPs submit a referral using a conventional letter. This is triaged by a clinician in secondary care who decides on the next steps.

This task is seen as an important but “unglamorous” daily function, says Tracey Gillies, medical director

for NHS Lothian in Edinburgh. With more than 120 possible actions and permutations, the workflow is also incredibly complex.

Philip Brocklehurst, senior manager in Deloitte’s AI team, says: “We asked ourselves if we could train a model that reads the referral letters for gastroenterology as they come in. If you can start to fully automate, that frees the clinicians’ time from doing that task at all.”

Patients were waiting far longer than the board wanted them to, says Gillies – sometimes up to a year for those on routine lists, provided the patients were at a low risk.

It was decided the process was in need of a review. Deloitte observed how the pathway worked. The team felt after watching, and talking to consultants, that the right AI could do a lot of the heavy lifting.

A mixed process that involved both automation and humans would work best, it was decided, because doctors could take several next steps – all of which would be deemed the “right” course of action.

“Within the automation, it proved quite difficult to replicate to the right level of consistency all of the different options the doctors might come up with,” says Gillies.

“What we could replicate was the urgent suspicion of cancer referral – the letters that had words within them that gave a red flag could be reliably coordinated.”

In January the process came out



Automation has sped up the referral process from two days to ten minutes

of “shadow mode” and went live. Already, the triage process of 50 per cent of urgent suspected cancer referrals is being automated.

Peter Lock, a director at Deloitte and overall project leader, says: “If the algorithm is not sure of next steps, it goes to a doctor. There’s no disadvantage to the patient because that’s the current process. If the algorithm is very sure it’s a referral that could be a cancer, the patient gets fast-tracked.”

Lock says automation has sped up the referral process from “two days to ten minutes”. “A referral came in at 7.05am,” he says. “A bot picked it up and immediately sent it to the AI engine, which decided it was an urgent, suspected cancer. It sent the message to the bookings team in ten minutes to book the patient in.”

As for legacy, Gillies says: “I think it’s been an eye-opening example of how many opportunities there are, and how far processes vary just within routine work in the NHS.” **JC**

## PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

### ‘It was bold at the time – it could have easily fallen apart’

How start-up tactics helped NHS region’s drive to hit cancer treatment targets

“Wicked problems” is a term often used within the NHS to describe clinical issues of a multidimensional, complex and changing nature. Contradictory or evolving needs mean these problems often require sustained intervention.

The dilemma of seeing and treating 360,000 people diagnosed with cancer each year within a statutory timeframe has only been exacerbated by Covid-19.

The standard states that 85 per cent of patients should receive their first definitive treatment within 62 days of their initial GP referral. But this has not been achieved nationally for years – as of December 2019, it was at 78 per cent.

In September 2018, NHS England made £10 million available to regions across the country to hit the target.

NECS Consultancy, part of the North of England Commissioning Support Unit, was tasked with assisting this programme, putting it in a unique position for a consultancy, as part of the same NHS “family”.

Dan Duggan, consultancy manager at NECS, says it “feels like a start-up within the wider NHS”.

“NECS Consultancy formed five years ago with the intention of bidding for work in the health sector. We live and die in the same way other consultancies do, but we are unique as a part of the NHS family.”

His colleague Neville Flanagan, a senior consultant, adds: “Any knowledge and learning is kept within the NHS. We’re part of the same organisation but are looking at things with a different perspective.”

This gives NECS the licence to act as a “critical friend” says Duggan.

NECS went into ten trusts, identifying ten high-impact actions – or so-called wicked problems. It tracked the trusts’ cancer pathways, looking for potential bottlenecks. Three key priority areas would then be chosen to be addressed.

Dr Nick White was at the time the national clinical lead at the medical directorate in NHS Improvement and worked with NECS. “Technically I was the client, but we effectively worked together for this process,” he says.

“Strategically, it was quite bold at the time and could have easily fallen apart,” Dr White says. “It was great to have a multi-party programme and make it work. Next level down there was some very good learning. We identified how money can be spent wisely.”

Dr White, now medical director for commissioning in the region, says that one crucial takeaway is how the NHS needs to get better at “disseminating learning and best practice”.

“Solutions can be kept in-house. There is enough good practice in the NHS for all of our targets to be met straight away. It’s a vast organisation. And really successful big organisations are the ones who learn from the front line and disseminate that rapidly.” **JC**

“People were very receptive,” says

## CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR



Safe as houses: customers can rent, rent-to-buy or even part buy, part rent

# Builders nimble in retirement

A flexible approach at retirement housing firm McCarthy & Stone saw a reversal of fortunes, gave customers options and left them better off

**W**hen John Tonkiss stepped up to become CEO of McCarthy & Stone in September 2018, the retirement housebuilder was on “what you might call a burning platform”.

A slowdown in the secondary retirement-housing market – in part due to Brexit uncertainty – meant retirees were struggling to sell their homes. This had hit the firm hard despite the newbuild retirement housing market being the most undersupplied in the UK.

While shares in the FTSE 250 company had hit an all-time low, the fundamentals of its business around purpose-built homes and onsite service support remained strong. “I had things in my mind that

we hadn’t truly leveraged,” Tonkiss says. “Taking over as CEO you get a window of opportunity. I wanted to be in front of investors six months later showing tangible progress.”

His strategy was based on the tenets of affordability, flexibility and choice. The most eye-catching initiative was to offer multiple multi-tenure options to customers, rather than just the option of selling their existing homes.

This meant McCarthy & Stone customers could now also choose to rent, rent-to-buy and even part buy, part rent. For a firm that for 41 years had only offered a build-and-sell option, “the organisational and cultural challenge was sizeable”.

Ravi Lal-Sarin, co-founder of Arca Blanca, a consulting and data company, had worked with Tonkiss previously and was approached to help execute this turnaround.

Time was of the essence, says Lal-Sarin. “We needed to show real traction on new multi-tenure options and get something on the ground very quickly in just a few months to prove that this is what customers really wanted.”

“John Tonkiss and I also wanted to demonstrate a new, faster way of working – getting people to think and operate differently.”

Arca Blanca set up an incubator-style team – a method popular with start-ups – stripping away layers of reporting lines while decisions were made by those at the top of the 2,500-strong organisation.

“It was a sprint-based, fast and agile approach,” Lal-Sarin explains. “Daily decisions were being made around feedback from customers. John and his CFO Rowan Baker were heavily involved.”

Incubator sites were set up at McCarthy & Stone offices around the country. Daily client feedback was reported by Lal-Sarin’s team to the firm’s HQ in Bournemouth. “We spent a lot of care and attention with the sales people in the customer-facing team on the ground,” says Lal-Sarin.

“This was to help them recognise when a client really wanted to live in this property, but would be better off through a multi-tenure option.”

Some 18 months on, rental is such an important part of McCarthy & Stone’s business, it could make up to 25 per cent of revenue this year.

“The agile, flexible approach to making change forced us to make calls – not reckless but punchy decisions,” declares Tonkiss.

“The fact that for 41 years we’ve never done it before, and you’ve got hundreds of people across the business that need to learn and do things in a new way... quite frankly if we had done it the old-fashioned way, maybe I wouldn’t be here talking about it right now.” **JC**  
Interview conducted prior to Covid-19

## SOCIAL VALUE

# How AI can help protect vulnerable children

An artificial intelligence pilot project could flag up at-risk youngsters in Gloucestershire

Child protection is a sensitive and complex business. It requires expertise from law enforcement, health, social care and education, with potentially life-changing consequences.

So Gloucestershire agencies made a bold move in partnering with BAE Systems to pilot an AI-powered tool to identify children at risk.

In Gloucestershire, the agencies’ information is centralised through its multi-agency safeguarding hub (Mash). But at the moment, “those silos of information are not necessarily brought together until something quite serious happens”, says Ravi Gogna, a public sector data analytics expert at BAE Systems Applied Intelligence.

“Serious” means a “red flag” event, such as when a child comes to school with bruises or doesn’t have the right equipment. “This could indicate that something isn’t right and we need to look into it,” says Andy Christopher, Gloucestershire Police Mash manager.

But relying on a single red flag event across a number of agencies may mean some at-risk children are not being



We accidentally found a gang. Visualising the risks around a group of children showed they were linked

identified as early as they could be.

The pilot solution used AI and machine-learning techniques to configure more than 100 indicators of risk traditionally used by practitioners – but used algorithms to combine this information and automate the process.

The tool was shown to considerably reduce the amount of time spent on case reviews. This might take several practitioners two and a half hours. The pilot tool reduced this to 15 minutes. And it had unexpected benefits: “We accidentally found a gang. When we collated, then visualised, the risks around a group of children, we found that they were linked,” Gogna says.

Christopher says: “When BAE walked in we thought, how on earth are they, in 12 weeks, going to understand what our job is?” But he was impressed with the challenges it overcame: “You start to realise it works, and you can use private sector expertise to understand the public sector problem.” **PB**

“People were very receptive,” says

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Enabling businesses to embrace uncertainty, evolve and prosper.



We are Arca Blanca, an integrated consultancy and data company.



# 'Perfect week' rebuilds Trust

The health and care service on the Isle of Wight urgently needed help to transform itself, which is where consultancy firm CF stepped in

**W**hen CF was appointed by the Isle of Wight NHS Trust to fix its "special measures" status, it had to undo years of entrenched behaviour. "There was change paralysis across the whole system," says May Li, principal at CF. The Trust, which serves the island's 140,000 or so inhabitants, had twice been given an overall rating of "inadequate" by Care



Measuring up: the Isle of Wight NHS Trust is on the right track at last

Quality Commission (CQC), the health and care regulator. "The scale of brokenness was enormous," says Li. "The Trust had 27 areas under inspection, 144 must-do requirements and a £35 million deficit across the service." CF was selected because of its track record within the NHS. "Our approach of coaching for executive leaders combined with staff

engagement for nurses, doctors and managers was key to unlocking a delivery chain from strategic vision to frontline improvement," says Li. The firm had to win over a sceptical workforce. "There were reservations about spending money on a consultancy. The system had been subject to waves of external intervention and reviews," she adds. CF used data analysis, interviews and observations to create a clear picture of the challenges they faced. A weekly meeting of senior leaders was chaired by Dame Ruth Carnall, co-founder and managing partner of CF, to go through the evidence while challenging actions. Says Li: "These meetings fostered consensus around a single plan." The consultancy introduced the concept of "the perfect week" to create momentum among Trust employees. "Change initially requires effort and resource as people learn new workflows. Without this space, people find the idea of change daunting," says Li. One week was chosen in which all health and care organisations within the Trust collectively committed to implement the new ways of working, with additional staff made available to assist. It's a critical part of the change process, says Li. "That level of support is not sustainable, but the addition for a week was crucial in ironing out any issues in new workflows and really ensured staff

“ “ Change requires effort and resource... Without this, the idea is daunting

were supported when learning." The outcome showed a more energised workforce with significant improvements, including a 10 per cent increase in discharges, enhanced data and information, more efficient results and better quality decision-making around patient discharges and future care. The consultancy also produced a three-year sustainability plan for health and care services. The plan was so well received that it was put forward as the Trust's response to the NHS Long Term Plan, a countrywide programme that sets out regional health service plans for the following decade. The sustainability plan also gave the Trust credibility and helped secure £48 million in government funding from a national allocation for NHS upgrades. Ultimately, CF had a significant impact and helped the Trust move from "inadequate" to "requiring improvement" in its CQC rating. **PB**

Over **1500** consultants and **15** firms have started the journey



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Paul Rees Jones EY with EDF  
Laura Flynn EY with Network Rail  
Matt Khaw EY with Roche  
Jenny Beard  
Farah Zazar-Ishaq Mei Pun EY with the Department of Justice and Equality  
Emma Landry Piyush Patel  
Ryan Gwinnett Kelly Demyan EY with EY Global  
EY with the Metropolitan Police Service

Congratulations to our 17 finalists and to all of the winners in the MCA Awards!

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