

Contractors Declare: Leading UK Contractors make their own commitment to tackling climate emergency

July 3, 2020



Following declarations by UK architects and engineers, several of the UK's leading construction companies have now combined to establish UK Contractors Declare in order to mobilise and coordinate action in another sector of the built environment.

The declaration has been made following discussions coordinated by Multiplex's Sustainability Director, Dr Eva Gkenakou, with other leading contractors and has eight founding signatories; BAM Construct UK, BAM Nuttall, Canary Wharf Contractors, Morgan Sindall Group plc, Multiplex, Sir Robert McAlpine, Skanska UK and Willmott Dixon.

In launching UK Contractors Declare, the founders have sought to make a statement of intent in preparation for specific action aimed at achieving net-zero carbon emissions, and limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, by no later than 2050.

In addition to major players in the sector, it is hoped that the declaration will encourage contractors on the

early stages of their sustainability journey to sign up and unite behind a common goal. By giving contractors a collective voice on the climate and biodiversity emergency, Contractors Declare is also intent on giving the supply chain, designers and ultimately clients, clarity on the contractors' ambition to achieve net zero.

Working as part of the wider global 'Construction Declares' movement, Contractors Declare is already engaging with Architects Declare and Engineers Declare to help promote a joined-up and strategic approach to combining resources, lobbying government and driving meaningful and effective change.

The founding signatories of Contractors Declare said: "We are hoping that strong support for the Contractors Declare statement will energise our sector to work with our Clients, designers and supply chains to take action.

Companies wishing to commit to the UK Contractors Declare and join the founding signatories can do so at: contractorsdeclare.co.uk

As founding signatories, we have committed to:

- Raise awareness of the climate and biodiversity emergencies and the urgent need for mitigation and adaptation action amongst our employees, clients, peers, collaborators and supply chains.
- Advocate for faster change in our industry towards regenerative practices and higher Governmental investment to support a just transition, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Establish climate mitigation and adaptation principles, as well as maximise biodiversity and air quality enhancement. This will be demonstrated through commitments, actions and achievements. Seek for us and our key supply chains to set targets for our own emissions and for the assets we design and build using recognised standards aligned to the 1.5-degree scenario.
- Share knowledge and research on an open source basis, to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies.
- Evaluate all new projects against the aim to contribute positively to mitigating climate and biodiversity breakdown, to adapt to climate change using nature-based solutions and encourage our clients to adopt this approach.
- Support the upgrade of existing assets for extended use as a more carbon efficient alternative to demolition and new build whenever there is a viable choice.
- Support and promote the use of life cycle costing, whole life carbon modelling and post occupancy evaluation/performance measurement. We will do that as part of our standard scope of work to reduce both embodied and operational resource use for the assets we design and build.
- Adopt and support more regenerative principles, with the aim of achieving net zero in line with recognised standards. For buildings this should be in line with the UKGBC's industry created definition of

net-zero carbon.

- Work together with engineers, designers, clients, collaborators and supply chain to further reduce construction waste and transition to a circular economy.
- Accelerate the shift to low embodied carbon materials in all our work and promote meaningful actions that will lead to reducing embodied carbon by at least 40% by 2030, based on the World Green Building Council call to action.
- Work with clients, designers and supply chains to design out waste in the assets we design and build, and further reduce waste during their construction, operation and deconstruction by transitioning to a circular economy."

Photo credit: Shutterstock