

**CONSTRUCT Interview –**  
**Neil Marney**  
**11/7/19**

## **Meet the Chairman**

Intro: Neil Marney, director of Essex-based Marney Construction, took up the role of Construct's new chairman in May 2019. In the first of our new series of member profiles, we ask Neil about his vision for Construct and key objectives for his time in the hot seat.

### **Neil, tell us a little about your background in construction.**

It was at the age of about 23 that I began my career in construction, as a steel fixer. Both my father and brother had been steel fixers, which was why I entered the industry initially. But it was when I met my wife that I really settled down and started to take things seriously; I began to see the potential in construction for an exciting and fulfilling career.

My son was just two or three months old when I took the plunge and started my own steel fixing business, working mainly in the London and Essex areas. Early on we built a strong portfolio, including a lot of work on the Channel Tunnel and gained a good reputation. Over the years the business diversified and grew into the respected company it is today.

### **Why did you want to take on the role of chairman of Construct?**

I wanted to give something back to the concrete structures industry. One reason for this is that during the early years of my business, I carried out work for quite a few companies that are fellow members of Construct. I learned such a lot from them, by observing the way that they operated their businesses and I'm grateful for that insight and inspiration.

I'm very honoured to have this role and I look forward to working with Construct's members going forward. It's clear that diversification and collaboration are crucial for us as an industry, because businesses have to keep innovating in order to stay healthy in changing times. So, I'm keen to hear about how members are achieving this.

### **Do you have any objectives for your time in the role?**

I have three key goals that I would like to achieve as chairman of Construct. The first is to offer members true value for money, by developing Construct as a place where members can engage with each other, make contacts and view us as their forum in the wider industry. Secondly, I want to continue with Construct's mission to promote high standards of health and safety in training, as this is essential to our success as an industry. Finally, I would like to make membership more of a fun experience by enhancing the social side of Construct, so members can get to know each other and build relationships in a relaxed, enjoyable context.

### **What do you see as the main challenges facing the concrete structures industry today?**

The rise of off-site construction is a big challenge for us. Large companies are investing millions in developing off-site construction methods, but this is not possible for everyone, particularly small developers.

Also, the construction skills gap in the UK is a huge issue for us, which needs to be approached with proactive, positive momentum. Construct is actively supporting the CCATF and YouthBuild, but engaging the younger generation in construction careers is, frankly, becoming more difficult.

I look forward to hearing members' views on how we can boost industry intake and would love to hear how they're tackling the skills gap challenge within their own businesses.

Furthermore, please do make use of the Construct social media and other communications to advertise your apprentice vacancies. Send your vacancies via email at [training@construct.org.uk](mailto:training@construct.org.uk) – it's a great way to reach out to the younger generation through our network.

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