

# YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR TROUBLE IS?

Now that we're in the penitential month of January, it's time to take a long, cold, sober look at could improve ... Emily Wright reports. Illustration by Elliott Thoburn

what's wrong with everybody else. So here's how the professions think their industry colleagues

THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IS ALWAYS heading towards the same goal – being paid – but fights with itself every step of the way there. But who knows? Perhaps the dawn of a new year will bring with it a wave of goodwill, mutual respect and empathy. We asked eight industry professionals to suggest new year's resolutions that would make their lives easier. The catch is that they have to make them for one another. So what does the contractor think the client should be working on this year? What does the client think of the architect's shirts? What does the architect think of quantity surveyors' ability to enjoy themselves? Read on to find out ...

### THE QUANTITY SURVEYOR'S RESOLUTIONS BY THE ARCHITECT

I will learn to love architects.

I will stop blaming the architects for buildings being so expensive and remember that this is usually the fault of the client.

I will stop suggesting cheaper alternatives without asking the architect first.

I will loosen up and have some fun.

As suggested by Robert Adam, director of Robert Adam Architects

### THE ARCHITECT BY THE CLIENT

I will not speak in architectisms and will learn to use language my client will understand.

I will pay more attention to the sectors I am working with. I must understand the essence of my clients' businesses in order to do a proper job.

I will stop dressing in way-out gear to try and prove I am a creative, arty-farty individual. I shall therefore destroy all of my wing-collar shirts and invest in a good, old-fashioned tie and a pair of decent cufflinks.

As suggested by Peter Woolliscroft, former construction director at Procure 21

### THE CONTRACTOR BY THE BUILDING SURVEYOR

I will have faith in the team's ability to report on capacity and appropriateness when invited to tender.

I will report anticipated supply problems early in projects and remember that despite the fact supply-chain management is improving with larger projects, we still need to concentrate on the small and medium-sized contracts.

I will be committed to site safety, which is helping to improve the public perception of the construction industry. I will remind myself regularly that although the industry has done great things in this area, continuous improvement is the only way forward.

As suggested by John Reyers, chairman of the RICS' building surveying faculty and director of Sanderson Weatherall

### THE STRUCTURAL ENGINEER BY THE QUANTITY SURVEYOR

I will always remind the client that the cheapest fee does not produce the best or most cost-effective structural design solution.

And every day I shall recite the mantra of Ove Arup: "When engineers and quantity surveyors discuss aesthetics and architects study what cranes do, we shall be on the right road."

I will always remember my worth. In the budget and cost plan I must remember that the structural engineer is given a large enough slice of the cake – construction projects are increasingly complex with a greater number of structural issues to resolve (brownfield sites, difficult ground conditions, contamination, and so on). Innovation and efficient use of space come at a price and complex projects require complex solutions; if these are not adequately priced it will be an uphill struggle from day one.

As suggested by Paul Hurford, managing director of quantity surveyor Boxall Sayer

### THE BUILDING SURVEYOR BY THE SERVICES ENGINEER

I must remember that letability of a building is in its flexibility.

I will measure twice and "duct" once.

I will remember that size does matter and I will give services engineers more plant space.

As suggested by Jerry Lehane, director of Chapman Bathurst



**THE CLIENT'S RESOLUTIONS  
BY THE CONTRACTOR**

I will decide what I really want and be clear. If I want my project to be form and function, I will say so. If I want something different, something I can be proud of, I will make it clear and ensure that I have a fully integrated team to deliver it for me.

I will choose my contractors based on their balance sheet and Nordic origins!

**I will choose all the players for my winning team before the training season begins. Not the defenders now and the strikers half way through the season.**

As suggested by David Fison, chief executive of Skanska UK

**THE SERVICES ENGINEER  
BY THE CONCRETE SPECIALIST**

I will become more involved with the initial design meetings and overlay services drawings onto structural drawings.

I will avoid making alterations to concrete after it has been cast, such as large-scale drilling.

I will endeavour not to alter drawings after the concrete specialist has finished the project.

As suggested by Seamus Regan, construction director of Northfield Construction

**THE SPECIALIST CONTRACTOR  
BY THE STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**

I resolve to fully understand, or at least read, the specification and engineers' drawings before we produce our detailed design, if necessary talking to the client's design engineer first.

I resolve to avoid the over-use of standard drawings, which save us a lot of time but often do not relate directly to the particular project, thus causing confusion for our dear friend the client's engineers.

I resolve to use technically qualified personnel, perhaps even structural engineers, but definitely not garrulous salesmen with loud ties, to liaise with the client's design engineer on technical issues.

As suggested by Bob Stagg, director at Alan Conisbee & Associates



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