Greetings from our new Chief Executive, plus the magic moment a bridge came tumbling down.

All the latest news from across the business, including wins, handovers and a look at Old Oak Common.

Family fun on the M4, how climate change affects all of us, and how our people make a difference.

More people than ever before responded to the employee engagement survey. So what did you say?

Gary Carvell, Chris Brennan, Andrew Thomsett and Ben Paddick report from HSEQ, finance, plant/fleet, and IT.

Virtual reality is not just for gamers – it’s a technology with the potential to enrich many aspects of our business.

Darren Rose explains how Central Services intends to deliver the kind of support our people and teams need to excel.

As you all know Bruno retired a few weeks ago. He dedicated time and effort to help VINCI Construction UK achieve an impressive turnaround. For this I would like to express my warmest thanks to Bruno.

But this success is also, of course, your success. It is the result of hard work, commitment to the values of the business and sticking to the plan. You have every reason to be proud of the progress you collectively made to assert the leadership of VINCI Construction UK.

During this period, the construction industry in the UK has seen several companies in difficulties while VINCI Construction UK has steadily improved. I believe that we are now one of the best contractors in the UK, and I am sure we will continue to go further.

The key to this success has been concentrating on our essential principles. Our differentiation comes from: our pride in being a site-focused contractor committed to serving our work sites and our customers’ needs; our emphasis on productivity; our clear sense of detail; our focus on quality; our comprehensive range of in-house design and installation competencies; a strong sense of business responsibility; and looking out for the wellbeing and safety of others.

There is a genuine sense of community in our business, borne out by the latest employee survey (p7). Responses are up, and so is engagement. It’s clear we want to keep improving together.

Ultimately, our success will always come from the trust of our clients. That stems from our capacity to deliver projects on time and on budget, which is rooted in core competencies. But it also draws on the way we empower each other, how we behave, how we think again and never take anything for granted.

VINCI Construction UK will end 2019 with one of its best results ever, a strong order book and a long list of projects in the pipeline. Well done. I am pleased and honoured to be heading your team.

The demolition of a large concrete structure, such as a bridge, is always a dramatic affair. The Recreation Ground bridge over the M4 (pictured) is no more, following an efficient smash and grab by the M4 J3-12 smart motorway team (the motorway reopened to traffic over 24 hours ahead of schedule). More than 2,000 tonnes of rubble was cleared away, which will be recycled and used in other parts of the scheme. It was the first of 11 bridge demolitions required by the project. Elsewhere, the M20 J10A team took down Highfield Lane bridge near J10, which will be replaced by two new integral bridges that will form part of the new junction.
Joint venture wins contract to deliver core HS2 station

The Balfour Beatty VINCI SYSTRA HS2 joint venture has been awarded the management of the construction and delivery of HS2’s new c. £1 billion Old Oak Common station. The joint venture will be responsible for the final design, construction and commissioning of Old Oak Common station in north west London, delivering six underground platforms as well as up to eight platforms on the adjacent Great Western main line.

The project will draw on Balfour Beatty’s in-depth expertise of constructing critical major transport terminals across the world, VINCI’s knowledge in constructing high-speed lines and UK rail infrastructure projects, and SYSTRA’s experience in designing, integrating and project managing transport systems. On completion, Old Oak Common station will become the UK’s best-connected station, dramatically increasing rail capacity across the UK by providing direct services to three major airports and eight of Britain’s 10 largest cities. It will also form part of one of Britain’s largest regeneration projects, helping to create up to 65,000 jobs and 25,000 new homes in west London. Nigel Russell, Project Director for the Balfour Beatty VINCI SYSTRA joint venture, said:

“This award reflects the combined strength of our joint venture and recognises our world-class capabilities in designing, managing and delivering complex infrastructure projects. We look forward to applying our expertise to deliver this critical piece of national infrastructure so essential to driving the skills agenda, to the rebalancing of the UK economy and to the enabling of a resilient and competitive construction and infrastructure industry.”

At its peak the project will employ a direct management team of 140 and a wider workforce of approximately 2,500.

Medieval Guildhall saved from the brink

Building Division has won the contract to restore and redevelop one of York’s most historically significant buildings. Under the £15.4 million deal, the Guildhall will undergo essential works to stabilise and rejuvenate the much-loved landmark.

The Guildhall is a collection of listed buildings built around the 15th century hall and riverside meeting room. Extensive rebuilding work was carried out following the Baedeker bombing raids in 1942, but in the intervening decades the buildings have only received reactive maintenance and repairs.

Recent surveys have revealed significant structural problems with the tower on the north side of the site, which is currently subsiding and cracking. The main roofs are also in need of replacement to prevent further water ingress. The works would see the building stabilised through major underpinning, protected from water damage and given a new lease of life. With modern elements surrounding the historic core, the redevelopment will secure the long-term future of the Guildhall site, offering high-quality office space, community use, café, a new riverside restaurant and better access for local residents.

One Central Park ready for business

Building Division has handed over the keys to One Central Park, a new workspace for business start-ups operating within Manchester’s thriving digital and media sector. Delivered through the North West Construction Hub Framework, the team worked with Manchester City Council to transform an existing building into vibrant workspace, complete with new plaza and transparent ‘Eden’-style ETFE covered internal courtyard, which aims to foster collaboration and creativity.

It’s hoped the £8.7 million development will act as a catalyst to attract creative start-ups to Manchester – a city which recently earned its place in the Top 20 European Digital City Index.
Total service
VINCI Facilities has been awarded a three-year maintenance and development contract to provide total facilities management services for around 2,000 properties across Transport for London’s commercial estate in the capital, with an option to extend for two years. The contract commences in 2020.

Hospital handover
Building Division has completed its first new build project for East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust on time and to budget. The new Burnley General Hospital facility includes an outpatient department with 21 consulting rooms, dedicated blood room, maxillofacial unit with labs, minor procedures theatre, and ophthalmology centre.

Concrete achievement
Taylor Woodrow has handed over Victoria Dock Portal – the first element of the Crossrail programme to be delivered to Rail for London Infrastructure (RfLI). The project included construction of a reinforced concrete portal structure for the Elizabeth line and emergency intervention and escape structure.

Medical emergency
Building Division has broken ground in delivering a new acute medical unit to increase capacity at Royal Blackburn Hospital’s busy emergency department. The £7.5 million project will also provide urgent medical assessment facilities.

Safe and sound
Well done to Building Division, which has achieved a RoSPA Order of Distinction (16 consecutive golds) for their ongoing efforts in helping staff, customers and contractors get safely home at the end of the working day.

White Hart Lane station shows new face to the world
The new-look White Hart Lane station has been opened for passengers, who will benefit from enhancements such as step-free access from street to platform. The bigger, brighter station provides quicker and easier access for local commuters and also visitors attending matches or events at the new Tottenham Hotspur stadium.

Taylor Woodrow’s engineering innovations included jacking two boxes into place beneath the London Overground track to provide two new pedestrian underpasses through the existing brick arch viaduct. The design of the station reflects the local heritage of the area. The terracotta pot-style cladding on the eastern and western façade, for example, acknowledges the time these were manufactured on White Hart Lane from clay sourced in local pits.

University of Hull acquires new student village
Building Division worked with the University Partnerships Programme (UPP) to deliver Westfield Court – a vibrant, village-style development of 1,462 single rooms and one bedroom apartments for students at the University of Hull. The final phase was handed over in August.

The community of nine buildings features a range of living, social and study spaces. The student rooms comprise individual studios, one-bedroom flats and standard and deluxe en-suite rooms clustered around shared kitchen and lounges. A 522-space car park and new link road were also delivered as part of the contract.

The VINCI team successfully developed and managed a multi-phased delivery programme and intricate logistics management strategy involving six tower cranes and mobile cranes.

Drone technology was used for quick and effective inspection of the buildings’ façade. We proposed an alternative to the original window design and detailing which saved the client £150 per square metre.

VINCI engaged the public and local stakeholders through local media, quarterly newsletters to neighbours and students, updates on the university’s website and meetings between local councillors, residents and the university. The team also ran a comprehensive programme of social, economic and environmental initiatives. These included 14 apprenticeships, jobs for four new entrants to the industry and eight graduates, recycling of 1,972 tonnes of waste, and planting of 89 new trees. For every £1 invested in the delivery of Westfield Court, £1.48 of social value was generated.
Lizzie Featherstone, Business Excellence Manager, has been named as one of the top 100 most influential women in the engineering sector. The list, produced by board appointments firm Inclusive Boards in partnership with the Financial Times, was announced at Inclusive Boards’ Women in Engineering Leadership Conference on 22 October.

Inclusive Boards’ Development Director Elizabeth Oni-Iyiola said: “Engineers have an impact on almost every area of our day to day lives. Lizzie and those featured today are role models who inspire those around them and demonstrate leadership and influence in the work that they do.”

Patrick Clarke, Director of Network Operations at UK Power Networks and one of the judges, commented: “I am personally inspired but not at all surprised by the tremendous talent on the Women in Engineering list. Sadly there are still plenty of people who will be surprised due to a mindset which says engineering equals males, not females. I took part as a judge because I wanted to be inspired.”

The M4 J3-12 smart motorway team recently opened the site to families and friends to show off the fantastic project and help inspire the next generation. The day was a great success, with approximately 150 people attending and everyone going away with a smile on their faces.

On arrival, children were given a high-vis vest so they could dress like mum or dad, and a small construction-related toy as a memento of the day. “My daughter thoroughly enjoyed the day and hasn’t stopped talking about it since. She now insists on wearing her new BBV-JV high-vis everywhere,” says Dan Evans, Environment Manager.

The main attraction was a plant display brought in from site and provided by Lynch Plant, made up of rollers, excavators and dumpers. The larger machines were set up with scaffolding steps and platforms so people could safely climb inside the cabs. Children and adults alike enjoyed the photo opportunities inside the machines.

Other highlights included a mini-circuit fenced off where visitors could watch plant in action, a scissor lift which was set up with an operator to allow a parent and child to go up and come back down, STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths) activities, giant garden games and much more.

The day ran smoothly thanks to the communications and stakeholder teams’ planning as well as the volunteers and compound team’s efforts on the day. Well done to everyone involved.

Lizzie Featherstone makes her mark

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DofE outdoor adventure

Every year, thousands of young people take part in an expedition as part of their Duke of Edinburgh’s (DofE) Award. They push themselves out of their comfort zone, enjoying the great outdoors, building resilience and learning the importance of teamwork.

The DofE Adventure is a chance for everyone aged 18+ to get a taste of an expedition, with weekend hiking and camping to fundraise for the DofE charity. On Saturday 21 September, an intrepid team of five from VINCI put on their walking boots and hiked 30km across the South Downs to support the charity that has helped VINCI to develop over 100 young people through the DofE Business Gold Award.

Today the DofE Award is more relevant and important than ever. Young people face unprecedented challenges. The scheme builds the character and attitude that many businesses prioritise over academic results. No other programme offers the same range of experiences and opportunities. The charity’s goal is for 350,000 young people to start their award per year in the UK by 2021, with 70,000 coming from disadvantaged backgrounds.
People round-up

In brief

Ready, steady, cook
VINCI St Modwen, which is delivering the New Covent Garden Market project, is working with the Yvonne Carr Centre to support a programme of engagement, education and skills development for local people. The centre will host a range of activities that might normally take place in a domestic kitchen.

Off the wall
Taylor Woodrow’s M20 J10A team joined forces with The Norton Knatchbull School in Ashford to win Ivor Goodsite’s Hoarding Competition, beating more than 80 other entries. Students from the school’s art department produced stunning artwork for the hoarding, which is adjacent to the ramp for a new footbridge.

One last heave
Building’s IHP Chase Farm site team helped to organise a charity ‘bed push’ to mark the completion of the project. Natalie Forrest, CEO of Chase Farm Hospital, said: “It was great fun and we’re grateful you all joined in to mark the end of a fabulous project. Thank you for your hard work and huge consideration while working alongside us.”

On the ball
The annual VINCI Construction UK five-a-side tournament in September was contested by a record 36 teams from VINCI companies. Five female, mixed and veteran teams also took part. Congratulations to the winners, VINCI France, and runners-up M4 Smart Warriors A. VINCI France’s Camille Tran was player of the tournament.

New appointments
Congratulations to John Roberts of Building Division, who has been promoted to Regional Managing Director, and Chris Winspear, promoted to Regional Director for the North East region.

Climate change: we are all part of the solution
Following the global strikes on 20 September, our environmental and sustainability teams are planning to share their knowledge and experience and discuss how to help people understand the complexity of climate change.

A recent lunch at Astral House featured Victoria Hughes (VINCI Facilities Business Responsibility Director), Dominika Gridley (VINCI plc HSEQ Manager), and Cara Kennelly (VINCI Facilities Social Sustainability Manager). Many attendees used the WWF Footprint tool to calculate their approximate annual carbon footprint. When compared to the UK government’s 2020 CO2 emissions target per person, the highest carbon footprint recorded was 214% of the target. The smallest was HSEQ’s Dominika Gridley, who was the only one to meet the target.

Try it for yourself at footprint.wwf.org.uk.

Climate change is hard to tackle because almost every action and activity results in carbon emissions. But that doesn’t mean we have to stop doing everything we enjoy to solve the problem. It’s all about making informed choices, such as swapping out a few red meat meals for chicken, pork or vegetarian options, or buying secondhand rather than new. You could see if there are local ways to recycle your unwanted items, possibly at recycling centres or through workplace recycling schemes.

Energy and travel are by far the most significant sources of carbon emissions in the UK. As renewable energy sources and low carbon vehicles have developed, low carbon energy plans and transport options have become more accessible. Next time you change your car or energy provider, investigate the low or zero carbon options in your area.

If you have any ideas for how to reduce the carbon footprint of your project or office – or VINCI itself – please contact cara.kennelly@vincifacilities.com

Anbu’s army runs for charity
The 38th annual Harefield Fun Run in support of The Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospitals charity took place in September. The Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust is world famous for treating patients with heart and lung disease.

Sugi Anbalagan, an Assistant Academy Adviser in HR supporting VINCI Facilities has a personal connection to the trust as her husband, Anbu, was treated at Harefield Hospital for dilated cardiomyopathy and then heart failure due to cardiomyopathy. In 2014, a donor heart became available for Anbu. After he was discharged, the couple registered a team – Anbu’s Army – in the annual Fun Run as a way to give back. Anbu’s Army has been involved in the event since 2015.

Sadly, Anbu passed away in August 2017, but Sugi has continued to support the trust. For the last two years, VINCI Construction UK employees have joined Anbu’s Army, supporting the day and taking part in the run. This year 12 members of staff signed up, bringing their families who got involved with packing goodie bags, organising T-shirts and handing out medals, which were sponsored by VINCI Facilities.

“We had a great day,” said Dympna Hodgson, also an Assistant Academy Adviser, who attended with her family. “My grandchildren took part and had a brilliant time trampolining, trying out circus skills and visiting the different stalls. They also took part in the run.”

Anbu’s Army won the largest team charity cup. “I was thrilled when I found out that Anbu’s Army had 54 members on the day,” said Sugi. “Without the continuous support from my colleagues at VINCI Construction UK, friends and family, we could not have achieved this number.”
ARE WE ENGAGED?

The employee engagement survey was an opportunity to have your say. How do people really feel about the business and their role within it?

The employee engagement survey is an important opportunity for us to learn from what our people really think about the business. The findings inform our business planning and influence the way we move forward. That’s why it’s good news that more people than ever before responded to this year’s survey (87% compared to 85% in 2018).

On this page we’ve picked out some highlights showing that we are moving in the right direction. However, there’s still much we can improve upon. Satisfaction with manager feedback has increased in Building, for example, but remains an issue for some. We would also like to see more people responding positively to the additional FIR questions, as some of those ‘preferring not to say’ feel less engaged.

Look out for the full published results and your local action plans.

**BUILDING**

10% increase

“My manager regularly gives me feedback and supports me to improve how I do my job”

**TAYLOR WOODROW**

14% increase

‘Internal communications’ from the company are good and keep everyone well informed

**VINCI FACILITIES**

13% increase

“I’m encouraged to share best practice and lessons learnt”

**CENTRAL SERVICES**

6% increase above VCUK benchmark

“Proud to say I work for the company”

**FIR**

96% response rate to additional FIR questions of which 10% selected ‘Prefer not to say’ and these people are on average 14% less engaged

**TECHNOLOGY CENTRE UK**

Consistent responses to “best thing about working for the company”

**PEOPLE, TEAM, COLLEAGUES**

86% overall engagement score for VCUK

87% response rate

The VCUK employee engagement survey is managed externally by People Insight to guarantee responses are anonymous and analysis is objective. Where we refer to a benchmark, this is based on People Insight data from 300 organisations.
Keep thinking
I am pleased by the way Think Again has been received by the business, our supply chain and our customers since its launch. We have continued with the rollout of the training modules to supervisors and managers, and are now starting to see people across the business speak the language of Think Again in all they do. The next step is to launch a suite of conversation starter toolbox talks which can be used to keep the message alive throughout people’s work activities, regardless of what they are. We have also expanded the Think Again pages on VINFO and will continue to keep them updated.

Even though our lost time injury (LTI) rate has decreased in recent months, we are still above where we were at this time last year, which means we still need to strive for improvements. As business units put together their plans for 2020 they should seek innovative ways to eliminate H&S risk as well as get the basics right.

Our recent Take a Break for Safety day, part of International Safety Week, saw a range of activities taking place across our offices and businesses. It was apt that the day fell on World Mental Health day, considering our focus on wellbeing over the past 12 months. An e-learning module for wellbeing is being finalised.

We are currently working on how best to integrate our Respect and Protect programme more fully into our business. In particular, the programme will reflect our emphasis on building a culture that cares for our environment as much as our people.

Finally, our biennial HSEQ seminar for HSEQ teams across the business took place on 5 November, providing a valuable opportunity to share best practice. Your HSEQ team will be happy to share the key learning points.

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Time to report
A couple of issues ago I asked for help from site teams to enable us to improve our payment practices, plus how to enjoy a relaxing Christmas break.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed this success, especially the site teams and the Finance team who have spent numerous hours cleansing the data and reviewing old transactions to ensure our reporting is accurate.

Christmas is coming, which sadly also means year-end reporting. We are aiming for a quick turnaround of reporting the November and December results to enable us to report under the ‘Fastclose’ process to our French parent. This process, which we adopted in 2017, has gone remarkably well for the past two years, in spite of my initial nervousness.

For all those reading this article who are in the middle of this reporting cycle, thank you again for your support. It’ll be well worth it – completing your 2019 reporting before the Christmas break means you can welcome the New Year with no columns of figures to trouble your fuzzy head!

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Switching to electric
Three months after taking responsibility for the fleet department, it’s clear to me that similar challenges face both the plant and fleet departments in reducing energy consumption, using cleaner energy and reducing carbon emissions.

The fleet department manages around 3,150 vehicles, including cars and light commercial vehicles, for VINCI Construction UK and other UK operating companies. The EU’s latest fuel efficiency rating testing procedure for petrol, diesel, electric and hybrid cars, known as the Worldwide Harmonised Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP), has been embedded within our vehicle procurement. An additional on-road test known as the RDE (Real Driving Emissions) test has also been introduced to help ensure cars meet emissions limits in a wider range of actual driving conditions.

We’re looking at the wider adoption of hybrid vehicles into the fleet portfolio. Hybrid cars combine a battery and engine for fuel efficiency and long range. However, now that the government has set 2040 as the target date for ending the sale of new petrol or diesel vehicles, we’ll need to develop a comprehensive VINCI electric car and van policy document. Many questions will need to be addressed: is the range sufficient for the vehicle’s intended use? Where and how will it be charged? What are the financial implications of a switch to electric vehicles? What about employees who don’t have the means to charge their vehicles overnight?

The rapid development of battery and charging technology is creating more uncertainty. A major car maker has launched a new version of its hydrogen-powered vehicle, betting on improved fuel cell technology giving greater range with the only by-product being water. What technology will win out? Watch this space.

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We’re here for you

With many older systems now working alongside our modern digital platform, it can create opportunities for ‘gremlins’ to occur. Our committed IT team has been working hard to identify and reduce the ones that cause outages and slowdowns, while continuing to provide the high level of service needed to support our business.

However, one of our most important goals is to move beyond tech support, becoming more of a partner enabling everyone to better meet their objectives. We have completed a survey examining the strategic alignment between IT and each business unit’s goals and priorities. Once we have analysed the findings, we’ll be in a better position to formulate a strategy for 2020.

What can you expect to see in the near future? Well, many of you will be receiving an update to Windows 10, a move to OneDrive for cloud based data storage, and refreshment of your existing hardware. So, things should be improving. But there’s no point having better kit if you don’t know how to get the most from it. We’re aware that people are not taking full advantage of everything that’s available to them. So we’re working with the Academy to improve our learning resources, utilising tools such as videos, V-Learn, lunch and learns, and FAQs. Training and digital education are crucial given the ever changing digital challenge we face.

We also have specific ongoing projects, such as the development of a defence-specific CAFM solution to support Facilities as it bids for a share of the Future Defence Infrastructure Services (FDIS) framework. Plus, we’re working with our colleagues at VINCI Construction France to study their IT systems and determine how we can align with them going forward. But rest assured we will continue to work on improving the smaller things that make a difference to everyone in their everyday activities.

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However hard our Central Service teams work to deliver the best possible service to the rest of the business, we know we’re not perfect. There is room for improvement. A key part of the problem is our historic silo mentality – the tendency for each team to focus on its own activities and behaviours, failing to take advantage of the knowledge and strengths of other teams. Failing to see that as a truly united endeavour, we can provide much better support to our colleagues across the business.

At the 2019 leadership conference in March, we took active steps to address the situation. The Central Service teams pledged to create a steering group to develop a united vision for how the teams work to support the business. This would include the alignment of common strategies, sharing best practice, and creating a structure that would support the most efficient delivery of the services we all provide.

It was more than just talk. Since the conference, Chris Brennan, Therese Stevenson, Steve Prior, Andy Thomsett, Neill Mant and I have set up the Central Service Steering Group and held a number of workshops. Taking the lead for the kind of example we want to set, all of our workshops took place away from the comfort of Watford and Widnes. The result is the Central Services V-Most for 2020, which is what we are sharing with you now.

Although each department has its own V-Most, we wanted a method for introducing broader strategies and ways of working that would help unite them in a common goal, and make them feel part of a wider team. We intend to focus on four key areas in 2020: the team, our customers, innovation and collaboration.

The team
How do we maintain an engaged and motivated workforce? Ideally, we would like our engagement scores to remain above 90%. In the last team survey, the aggregated engagement score for the Central Service teams was 91% – good, but not spectacular. The Reward and Recognition scheme was introduced this year to encourage people to recognise the contribution of their colleagues within the Central Service teams. Already there have been 90 nominations, which is an excellent start. Please note that nominations can also be made from staff outside the Central Service teams.

Our customers
Without our customers, the business wouldn’t exist. It’s essential that we understand how well Central Services support the operational management of sites and projects. Which parts work well, and which require improvement? We’ll be organising a customer satisfaction survey, covering all areas of Central Services, to find out just how well we’re doing. The steering group will review the findings and feed the results into each of the departments’ improvement plans, as well as take responsibility for actions that span the wider group. We also need to get better at demonstrating the value we add, whether it relates to insurance, risk and compliance, finance and purchasing, fleet and plant management, people or digital and IT.
Innovation

Innovation is central to continuous improvement, and we had a great opportunity to show what we can do in last year’s Innovation Awards when a Central Services category was included for the first time. In the end we made eight submissions, but we could have done more – particularly since many of our team members were heavily involved in submissions from other parts of the business.

Failing to make time to reflect on and celebrate our achievements before moving on to the next issue or challenge means we often miss the opportunity to recognise and share the innovations we do make. Sharing our successes will be a key aim in 2020, ensuring our staff can rally behind their achievements and feel proud to be part of a creative, forward-looking team.

Collaboration

The existence of silos is a legacy problem shared by all established businesses. We’ve been working hard to break them down, assisted by advancements in technology that mean we are all more connected than ever. These new technologies allow us to collaborate in fresh new ways that improve our services. Platforms such as Service Manager provide alternative approaches to managing processes that span departments, creating shared responsibility for getting the work done.

However, collaboration is about more than simply implementing new toolsets – it requires fundamental change in the way we think and behave. It’s about communication and building strong relationships. Our 2020 Central Services Focus Day will bring our teams together to learn more about each other, brainstorming ways to improve collaboration and stimulate innovation.

You can all be assured that we’re committed to providing a better service, building on the progress of the last few years. The Central Services V-Most provides us with the structure to make it happen, and I hope to be able to report back in 18 months to share some tangible achievements.
When people opt for a career in facilities management, they possibly don’t imagine the facilities might be apiaries. And that they will be catering to the needs and comfort of occupants who sting when disturbed. But since 2013 VINCI Facilities has been managing beehives on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government, beginning with apiaries at Llandudno Junction and Aberystwyth. In 2016, when we won the All Wales contract, we inherited another active apiary in Merthyr Tydfil. Altogether, VINCI Facilities takes care of five beehives as part of our operations across the three sites. The result has been the production of over 700 jars of honey, raising more than £7,000 for charity.

As Tony Raikes, VINCI Facilities MD, commented: “This is something completely different for VINCI and our people to be involved with.” So why are we doing it? Of course, it’s not about the honey (delicious though it is). VINCI Facilities took this unusual step in support of the Welsh Government’s Action Plan for Pollinators, launched in 2013. Honey bees play a vital role in our ecosystem and food supply, but are in serious trouble due to loss of habitat, disease and harmful pesticides. Our teams manage the grounds to support the bees and promote biodiversity, making a lasting contribution to the environment. And anyone who thinks differently can buzz off.