

CROSS PARTY GROUP IN THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ON CONSTRUCTION

18.00 Wednesday 1st October 2025
Committee room 4

AGM Minutes

Present

MSPs

Monica Lennon MSP
Mercedes Villalba MSP
Sharon Dowe MSP

Non-MSP Group Members Present

Elaine Ellis,	Skills Development Scotland
Fiona Harper	SECTT
Gordon Nelson,	Federations of Master Builders (FMB)
Grahame Barn,	CECA Scotland & CPG Treasurer
Jocelyne Fleming,	Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)
John Ferguson	Sisaltech Ltd
Ryan Murphy	Evolution Fasteners (UK) Ltd
Stuart Hay	Royal Incorporation of Architects Scotland (RIAS)
William Crowe,	Institute of Structural Engineers
Yvonne Wilson	SELECT & CPG Secretary

Others present

Arthur Keller	CIEEM Scotland Policy group
Cameron MacIver	Cameron Ecology Ltd
Claudia Gebhardt	BATS
Dr Fatma Pelin Ekdi	Anderson Bell & Christie
Dr Jannik Giesekam	University of Strathclyde
Francisco Shankland	Anderson Bell & Christie
Jenny Munro	Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)
Joanna Cloy	Fidra
John Kane	
Jonathan McQuillan	Anderson Bell & Christie
Rowena Statt	Anderson Bell & Christie
Tim Wilson	Landscape Institute

Apologies

Alexander Burnett,	MSP
Gordon Macdonald	MSP
Graham Simpson	MSP
Lorna Slater	MSP
Sarah Boyack	MSP
Alan Wilson	SELECT
Allan Thomson	Central Training
Ann Marie Waugh	Glass and Glazing Federation
Brett Amphlett	Builders Merchants Federation (BMF)
Chris Pateman	EPIC
Dr Sophie Brett	Prosper Scotland
Elizabeth Halliday	Morgan Sindall
Elliot Robertson	Robertson Group
Fiona Hodgson	Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIPEF)
Graham Jackson	Thorntons Law
Karen Stevenson	Scottish Futures Trust
Lauren Pennycook	CITB
Lorraine Sweeney	Supply Chain School
Paul McGirk	Hub Southeast
Robert Sutherland	McLaughlin & Harvey Construction Ltd
Stephen Slessor	Rossshire Engineering
Steven Dillion	Unite the Union
Stuart Tennant	UWS

1. Welcome and apologies

The Convener, Monica Lennon MSP (ML) welcomed everyone to the Parliament and confirmed we would hold the AGM before the ordinary meeting. Yvonne Wilson (YW) group secretary advised that the apologies would be recorded on the minutes.

ML reminded those present that this Cross-Party Group (CPG) will be the forum for Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), construction industry stakeholders and interested parties to engage directly with each other in order to raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges facing the sector and to better inform the development of policy.

2. Notes from the 2024 AGM of the CPG on Construction held in the Scottish Parliament on 6th November 2024.

No comments or clarifications, the 2023 minutes were proposed by Gordon Nelson (GN) and seconded by Cameron MacIver (CM).

3. Accounts for the period to 30th September 2025

The Group's Treasurer Grahame Barn (GB) presented the audited accounts up to 30 September 2025. The current balance of £1,331.97 meaning that no invoices for group subscriptions will be issued to members ahead of the 2026 AGM. All the expenditure of the Group is on catering for in-person meetings of the Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament totalling £464.40.

4. Election of Office Bearers

4.1. Convener (currently Monica Lennon MSP)

With no other MSP having put their name forward, Sharon Dowey MSP (SD) proposed ML for the position, with Mercedes Villalba (MV) MSP seconding. ML confirmed as the CPG's Convener.

4.2. Deputy Conveners (currently Alexander Burnett MSP & Gordon Macdonald MSP)

ML noted that the Deputy Conveners are currently Alexander Burnett (AB) MSP & Gordon Macdonald (GM) MSP. Neither AB nor GM could make it today.

SD and MV proposed AB and GM and as our Deputy Conveners. All present approved. AB and GM confirmed as joint Deputy Conveners.

4.3. Election of a secretary for the CPG

The current Secretary, Yvonne Wilson (YW) confirmed at the 2024 AGM is happy to continue as Secretary.

ML asked all present if there were any other non-MSP members who would like to put their names forward. No other candidates came forward, ML welcomed YW as the Secretary. All members present confirmed acceptance of YW as the Secretary of the CPG on Construction.

4.4. Treasurer (currently Grahame Barn)

No other proposals received from non-MSP members. GB confirmed that he is willing to continue as Treasurer. All present approved. GB confirmed as the Treasurer.

5. Discussion on topics for the CPG to discuss in 2025

ML noted that we have three prior suggestions:

- The Monklands Replacement Project, (MRP) proposed by Craig McKay, NHS Lanarkshire, which ML advised was within her constituency.
- HSE Workplan 2026 proposed by Graham Barne, CECA Scotland, was discussed and agreed this would be for a date later in the year as the workplan only becomes available in April.
- Elizabeth Halliday of Morgan Sindall to share the collaborative work they have been delivering with DYW on Construction Work Tasters.

Stuart Hay (SH) suggested procurement, due to the issues being experienced across the sector.

ML thanked everyone for these suggestions and asked SH to speak to YW about a joint presentation on Procurement and MRP for the next meeting.

6. Date of the next AGM

With Parliamentary rules dictating that all CPG AGM's must be within 11-13 months of the previous one, our 2026 AGM will be held sometime between early October and early December 2025.

ML thanked everyone and closed the AGM and we immediately started the ordinary meeting of the CPG.

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting

1. Welcome, introduction, and apologies from Monica Lennon MSP.

With the 2025 AGM concluded immediately before this meeting ML noted that members of the Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Construction have been joined by members of the Cross-Party groups on Economy and Nature.

In the last year the group has met in person to hear insights on and discuss a range of topics including:

- Licence to Build: a pathway to license UK Construction by Gordon Nelson, Federation Master Builders
- The last time we met, we heard from Len Bunton and Ian Honeyman from Construction Industry Collective Voice (CICV) about the current challenges surrounding payment and cash flow in the construction industry, noting that the issue is escalating monthly.

2. Matters arising

Notes of the meeting held on 20 March 2025 were circulated in advance of today. No comments or clarifications raised, the notes were proposed by Willie Crowe (WC) and seconded Grahame Barn (GB).

3. New member proposals

ML noted there were no new members proposed

4. Embodied Carbon White Paper

Presentation from the Jonathan McQuillan (JM) and Dr Fatma Pelin Ekdi (DFPE) from Anderson Bell Christie who presented on the launch of their joint paper, titled Balance

Key Points:

As Scotland decarbonises operational energy the share of embodied carbon (from materials, construction, demolition) in total emissions becomes proportionally larger especially if it remains unregulated.

- The White Paper is a call to incorporate a lifecycle approach (not just operational emissions) into built environment policy and regulation.
- It frames a place-based net zero strategy: combining reductions in building emissions with urban greening / tree planting and carbon sequestration with a future goal of 150 kg CO₂e per m² across the lifecycle
- The roadmap is long term and working towards 2045, so early phases will require incremental steps, testing, capacity building (e.g. in deconstruction), and changes to procurement and industry practices.
- They present the 150 kgCO₂e/m² figure as ambitious but deliverable, provided systemic change occurs in materials, design, construction and planning
- The integration of trees and urban greening is used not just for carbon offset, but also for co-benefits: mitigating urban heat, improving air quality, increasing biodiversity, and improving wellbeing.

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation

- Cameron MacIver (CM) : Asked whether tree lifespan had been considered in sequestration models. JM: Estimated tree lifetime between 60–100 years.
- Tim Wilson (TW): Highlighted high failure rates in current tree planting.
 - Stressed the need to change current practice.
 - Called for early consultation with all trades in procurement to improve outcomes.

- Arthur Kelly (AK): Asked if research covered chemicals in recycled materials. JM: Confirmed they considered various materials, citing wood fibre as a natural, fire-resistant option.
- William Crowe (WC): Warned that tree planting may not be popular due to subsidence risks. JM: Reiterated the importance of design and landscape planning from the outset.
- John Ferguson (JF): Shared that circular insulation (low carbon) sells well to homeowners, but homebuilders still choose cheaper options since there's no legislation requiring change.
- Dr Jannik Gieseke: Supported principles but urged:
 - A UK-wide approach.
 - Stronger NPF4 guidance.
 - Learning from international policy precedents.
- ML: Asked about SG position. Response: Limited engagement / not much feedback received so far.
- Ryan Murphy (RM): Asked if the paper had been peer-reviewed. Dr Fatima: Confirmed no peer review, as it was prepared for commercial purposes.
- Gordon Nelson (GN): As co-chair of the Net Zero group for the Construction Accord, emphasised that embodied carbon remains a bit of a blind spot.

4. Any other business

Nothing raised.

5. Date of Next Meeting

ML will consult with YW, but we anticipate that this will be in January or February 2026.

ML closed the ordinary meeting.

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