

Peter Fitzgibbon, Editor

# Investing in Digital Built Britain



Judging by the attendance at this year's Digital Construction Week (DCW) event in London (see page 48) one would never have guessed that the construction industry was stuck in the doldrums. True, it has experienced its fastest drop in output since 2009, much of which can be attributable to political and economic uncertainty.

Yet for many, the downturn is an opportunity to plan for the upswing, and investing in digital is a no-brainer. As the Construction Industry Training Board suggests in a recent report, 'The adoption of digital technologies is a huge opportunity for the UK construction industry, providing it with the chance to improve its

productivity, increase efficiency and attract a younger and more diverse workforce.'

In our last issue, Bertel Kirkeby explored the productivity benefits of robotic pre-marking on Britain's highways, and in this issue (page 50) Neil Pollock makes the case for surveying technologies that help us work faster and smarter. Automating the labour-intensive, time-consuming task of staking-out is a case in point, and surmounting this challenge was the theme of a DCW presentation by Tom Yeshurun whose Israeli start-up, Civrone, has developed the first autonomous land surveying marking drone.

As well as surveying a site using its built-

in GPS system, the drone's robotic system inserts 'smart' pegs into the ground that subsequently provide data to construction teams via a smartphone app. In addition to performing the staking-out task four times faster than hitherto, this robotic platform can work round-the-clock. Yeshurun argues that construction has so far failed to exploit the true potential of drones, but times are changing. Indeed, the CITB report warns that, 'Without widespread adoption of digital technologies, the industry will become marginalised and at risk of significant disruption.'

*Unlocking Construction's Digital Future: A skills plan for industry. CITB. 2018*

NEWS EXTRA

## Kinesis Vehicle Tracking Scores Game, Set & Match at European Tennis Open

Kinesis equipped a fleet of luxury vehicles with advanced telematics during the **2019 European Open**, held last October in Antwerp, Belgium. Fitted to vehicles supplied by Jaguar, Kinesis vehicle tracking will provide real time visibility of vehicle movements for logistics, security and safety. Working alongside Tennium, a global tennis platform company that owns the ATP250 tournaments in Antwerp and Buenos Aires and represents a number of world class players, Kinesis fitted the fleet with GPS powered devices. Transmitting accurate and up to the minute vehicle locations together driver assessment data, Kinesis gave 24/7 visibility of the tournament vehicles from any internet connected device. The Jaguar Land Rover supplied vehicles included high end cars, limousines and minibuses and were used to collect players from the airport and transport them between official hotels and the Lotto Arena. The fleet was used to transport ATP officials, invited guests and VIPs. [www.kinesisfleet.com](http://www.kinesisfleet.com)



## UK Space Organisations Collaborate to Develop Space Telescope

Three UK Space organisations, **Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL)**, the University of Oxford and the Surrey Space Centre (SSC), have been awarded National Space Technology Programme (NSTP) funding to develop a novel self-aligning deployable space telescope, designed for sub 1 metre ground sample imaging requirements in a small launch volume spacecraft. With funding from the Centre for Earth Observation Instrumentation (CEOI), SSTL has already been working with the SSC to develop a telescopic deployable structure and has also worked with the Dynamic Optics and Photonics Group at the University of Oxford on an autonomous system to align the telescope on the ground for improved accuracy and efficiency. The NSTP funding will see these projects progress to the build and test of a working demonstrator telescope designed to release from its stowed launch configuration, deploy to its full length, and then autonomously align ready for in-orbit image acquisition. [www.sstl.co.uk](http://www.sstl.co.uk)



## 1Spatial and Northern Gas Networks recognised for smart software development

**1Spatial** and **Northern Gas Networks (NGN)**, the gas distributor for the North of England, were proud recipients of the award for **Application of Digital Technology** at UKSTT's annual awards this month. UKSTT (the United Kingdom Society for Trenchless Technology) is a registered charity involved in the

development and promotion of Trenchless, or "No-Dig", techniques to reduce the impact of unnecessary road excavations. The award was won for Northern Gas Networks' and 1Spatial's Smart Signage, Lighting and Guarding project which involved the development of a software programme

which can lessen the impact of essential roadworks through the creation of instant plans that are sensitive to local conditions. The approach could dramatically reduce the time, travel, cost and carbon emissions involved in excavating roads and minimise the impact of essential roadworks. [www.1spatial.com](http://www.1spatial.com)