



PRODUCTIVITY, QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY: HOW CAN THE USE OF AI, DATA, AND MMC DRIVE UP STANDARDS?

At the 2025 UKREiiF Roundtable, leaders from across the construction sector gathered to address one of the industry's most urgent challenges: how to simultaneously advance productivity, quality and sustainability while navigating the complex realities of today's market.

The discussion brought together perspectives from developers, contractors, technology providers, and supply chain experts to examine how data, digital tools, and industrialised methods of construction could unlock meaningful change — and where significant barriers to adoption still remain.

The Data Challenge: Measurement, Transparency, and Trust

Reliable data emerged as the cornerstone of effective performance improvement. Without high-quality, structured information, efforts to reduce waste, drive efficiencies, and track carbon impacts remain fragmented and inconsistent.

Site waste management provided a clear example. Developers shared how third-party platforms are helping them monitor both material deliveries and waste generation, offering detailed visibility into site-level inefficiencies. For materials like plasterboard, where waste remains disproportionately high, access to granular data enables targeted interventions.

However, concerns were raised regarding an emerging capability gap between Tier 1 contractors and SME supply chain partners, many of whom lack the technical infrastructure or financial capacity to capture this level of data. The panel strongly agreed that larger organisations have a critical role to play in providing leadership and support to help close this gap, creating more



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consistent and meaningful industry-wide metrics. One participant noted that “benchmarks are essential — but targets alone rarely change behaviour. What's needed is consistent transparency and shared accountability.”

Beyond Carbon: Circularity and the Opportunity for Systemic Change

While carbon reduction continues to dominate sustainability discussions, the panel stressed the importance of a more holistic approach to circularity — encompassing material reuse, lifecycle thinking, and resource stewardship.

Material passports were highlighted as one of the most promising enablers for circular construction. By standardising how product data is captured and shared across the supply chain, material passports have the potential to overcome longstanding challenges around classification, traceability, and reusability of materials.

Several developers have already begun mandating material passport adoption within their projects, positioning structured data as both a sustainability driver and a mechanism for improved supply chain resilience.

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Innovation Friction: Systemic Barriers to Adoption

While technological solutions are advancing rapidly, the panel identified several structural barriers that continue to inhibit wider adoption of innovative practices:

- **Lengthy approval timescales from industry bodies and insurers**
- **A lack of independent, third-party validation for emerging materials**
- **Increasing financial pressures leading to risk-averse procurement behaviour**

Despite these challenges, programmes such as Innovate UK were noted as valuable — yet underutilised — tools for de-risking innovation at early stages.

Industrialised Construction: Moving from Pilot to Platform

The panel concluded with a discussion on the growing potential of industrialised, platform-based approaches to drive system-level improvements in quality, consistency, and productivity.

Digital tools such as KOPE are enabling design teams to standardise key components earlier in the process, embedding quality assurance and improving interface coordination long before work begins on site. Earlier engagement of the supply chain — particularly during RIBA Stage 3 — was seen as crucial for realising these benefits at scale.

Drawing parallels to industries such as fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and steel, the participants noted how standardised data and digital integration have already transformed supply chains elsewhere — and offer a clear blueprint for construction.



The technology is here. The standards exist. The real opportunity now lies in industry leadership and cultural shift.



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Closing Reflections

The discussion underscored that while the sector’s technical capabilities continue to evolve, many of the most significant barriers to progress remain structural, cultural, and financial.

Achieving meaningful, scalable transformation will demand:

- **Greater transparency and shared accountability across stakeholders**
- **Consistent leadership from major developers and contractors**
- **Increased support for SMEs to access data and innovation pathways**
- **More agile collaboration between industry bodies, insurers, and innovators**

The opportunity is significant — but will require collective, coordinated effort if the construction sector is to fully capitalise on the digital, circular and industrialised future that is increasingly within reach.

Attendees

Helen Hamilton - Head of Sector Development – Residential, Saint-Gobain Interior Solutions (host)

Anna Moore – CEO & Founder, Domna

Ben Raybould – Digital Lead (Director) – Health Delivery Partnership for NHP, Turner & Townsend

Beth Knight - Social Sustainability – Business & Commercial Banking, Lloyds Banking Group

Dr Olli Jones - Associate Director Sustainability & Innovation, Cundall

Jamie Hillier - Partner, Akerlof

Kerstin Kane - Principal Planning Officer (Sustainability), City of London Corporation

Martin Keogh - Saint-Gobain Interior Solutions, InteWall Strategic Development Manager – Commercial

Louis Sauderson - Sustainability Analyst, Seddon Construction

Louise Clarke - Group Head of Sustainability, Berkeley Group

Michela Ravaglia – Head of Sustainability, Wates Group

Ruhksana Faiz Mann - Managing Director - Environment, Sustainability and Planning, Tetra Tech Europe

Xander Mckinstry - Geographic Information Science Consultant, Tetra Tech Europe