

## Constructing the Gold Standard

Contracting authorities and suppliers need to be able to easily identify those frameworks which meet best practices and embody the policies set out in the Construction Playbook to make informed decisions when comparing frameworks, either for project/programme delivery or for participation in tendering exercises.

[Constructing the Gold Standard](#) is an independent review of public sector construction frameworks undertaken by David Mosey for the Cabinet Office. It provides 24 Gold Standard recommendations with detailed supporting actions designed to improve the outcomes delivered by framework strategies, procurement, contracting and management.

The recommendations build on the policies of the **Construction Playbook** and the benchmark components against which new proposed frameworks and framework contracts can be measured.

One of the key policy reforms is ‘Effective Contracting’, designed to ensure that contracts are structured to support an exchange of data, collaboration, improve value and manage risk with clear expectations for continuous improvement and consistent with the principles contained within the Construction Playbook.

The MHA+ frameworks reflect many of the recommendations of the review but no framework currently meets all of the recommendations. We are assessing where we can already evidence compliance and where we need to do more to gather evidence, amend our processes or undertake further work and this will be reflected through our annual Business Plan.



## New MHA+ Service Improvement Group website is now live

The new MHA Plus Service Improvement Group members **website** went live on 2 February 2022 and replaces the old MSIG website.

Those members who previously had user accounts for the MSIG website will have automatically received activation emails from measure2improve who are hosting the new site. If you are unable to activate your account or if you would like set up an account and you haven't received an activation message, please contact **Alice Russell**

The new members website will provide information on SIG meetings (agendas, minutes, presentations etc.), a document library, comparative/benchmarking data and online discussion boards which have been updated to allow members to post new items themselves.

A brief instruction document will be published to assist users, but we hope that members will find the site simple and easy to use.

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## 2022 Annual Event – call for content

Building on the success of the event in October last year, we are currently in the early stages of planning this year's face-to-face annual event in June on the theme of 'Carbon Reduction and Value'.

Value can be added through social, economic, or environmental benefits so there should be a wide range of projects that we can share with each other. As well as celebrating the achievements of MSF3 and welcoming in MSF4, we would like to ensure that we showcase the work of our members from right across the Alliance. With some of our member authorities appearing in industry publications recently as leading in areas such as digital innovation, carbon reduction planning, transport logistics and mobility, I am hoping that we will be spoilt for choice.

The MHA+ Executive Board has confirmed the annual event as their annual meeting for networking and engagement in-person, so this is a key opportunity to inform and impress your peers. Please contact Karen Notman if you have something you would like to contribute to the day.

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## Highways Sector Council landmark survey now open

As a member of the Highways Sector Council (HSC), a public and private sector council that covers both strategic and local roads in England, Ann Carruthers MHA+ Chair wants to encourage all members to share the link to the HSC's survey (<https://forms.office.com/r/cYChhQjKFu>) with their colleagues in the highways sector.

The survey only takes five minutes to complete and all responses are completely anonymous, so please be completely open in your responses

The survey closes on 11 March 2022 and will build on existing data and information to form a key part of HSC's research to develop a campaign to make highways a career of choice. HSC are seeking the views of those individuals working within the highways sector, including both operational and non-operational employees at all levels, about what they believe makes it great and some of the opportunities and barriers it faces.

The survey's findings will provide the foundation elements that will take the sector forward, shaping it to attract a diverse range of people and, more importantly, position it as an attractive career option full of potential, opportunity and reward. More information is available on the [HSC's website](#).

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## Please complete your 360° feedback forms

Monitoring performance is an important aspect of framework management and decision-making. PSP 3 Framework suppliers have therefore been asked to ensure that regular feedback forms are completed for all project and secondment work contracted through the two frameworks and this needs client co-operation and engagement.

Clients have been scoring suppliers on their service for a number of years (180° feedback) but 'developing and sharing best practice' is one of the key aims of the Alliance. With project management identified as a key area for skills development for efficient and effective project delivery, all parties need to be prepared to learn from honest feedback and dialogue to facilitate continuous improvement.

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## MHA+ Service Improvement Groups

It has been a busy start to 2022 with eight Service Improvement Group meetings having taken place in January and February. Thanks again to all those who have taken the time to attend or send in contributions or share data. It is encouraging to see new members joining the groups and realising the benefits that can be gained from sharing expertise and knowledge across the region.

**Highways Asset Management** – The meeting was focussed on carbon reduction and carbon calculator initiatives within MHA Plus authorities and at a national level.

**Low Carbon Travel & Transport**- Following suggestions by group members, we will be setting up two new sub-groups (1.EV infrastructure/initiatives and 2. Section 106 Travel Plan Monitoring) that will report back to the main LCTT group.

**Civil Parking Enforcement** – This group now has a new chair; Ashley Snookes from Leicester City has agreed to take on the role as James Adams from Derbyshire County Council steps down after many years of service.

**Term Community** – This group held an initial meeting to ‘reset’ and find volunteers for a chair and vice-chair to take the group forward. Further information will be provided re: future meeting dates shortly.

**Casualty Reduction** – Clearview Intelligence attended to present their road safety products (including solar road studs, vehicle detection and VAS). Slides include several case studies and are available on the new MHA Plus SIG members website.

**Flood Water Management** – Discussions around NW Regional SUDS proforma, Project Management of flood related schemes and Land Drainage Act enforcement process and procedure.

**Traffic Signals** – Presentations from Yunex on the management and consultancy services they provide (with positive examples/experiences from group members) and Integrated Traffic Services Ltd on the subject of MOVA 8.

**Traffic Engineering** – The topic was Moving Traffic Enforcement prior to legislative changes which are due to come into force on 1 June 2022.

Details of all upcoming Service Improvement Group meetings are available on the [MHA+ calendar](#) and further information on each service improvement group is available from [Alice Russell](#).

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## Make use of your MHA+ Website

Don't forget that the MHA+ website is the main source of information and news about the Alliance. The MHA+ team is continuing to review and update content to help improve ease of use and access to reference information and to refresh news items on a regular basis. A shortcut to the new MHA+ Service Improvement Groups Site can be found via the Service Improvement Groups page, for example. Visit [www.mhaplus.org.uk](http://www.mhaplus.org.uk) and let us know the areas we should be looking to improve next.

Links to the webpages that highlight best practice include:

<https://www.mhaplus.org.uk/work-streams/professional-services/projects/>

<https://www.mhaplus.org.uk/work-streams/case-studies/>

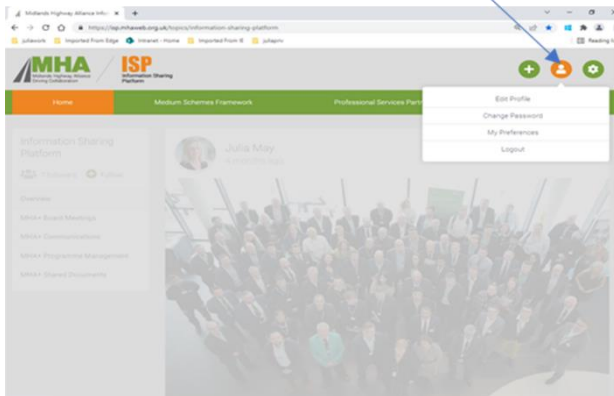
Members can also access a range of learning, training and development opportunities provided by the MHA skills community, sector partners and MHA+ members through the [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#). Detailed information on all MHA+ events is available on the [MHA+ calendar](#).

The Information Sharing Platform (ISP) hosts a range of helpful resources, shared reference documents, confidential documents, and notes of meetings for our members. Details on how to become an ISP user and direct access to the ISP can be accessed from the [MHA+ website](#).

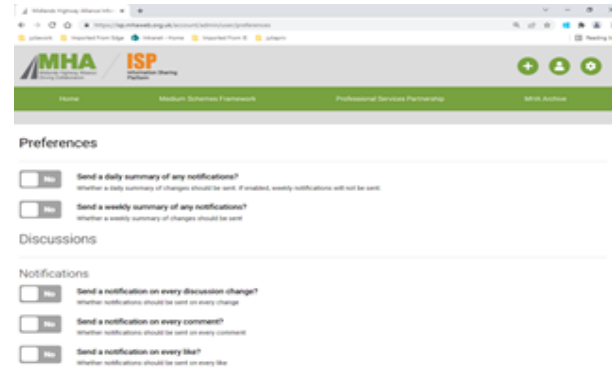


Every post has the option to follow – you can choose which area of the ISP you want to follow

On the home screen click on the outline



You can opt-in to receive notifications - click on my preferences and choose which option suits you



## Standards for Highways: DMRB Environment section

These have been specially developed in conjunction with the EA and are free and available to download.

### [Standards for highways - Sustainability and Environment](#)

Another document is LA113 Road drainage and water environment

### [Standards for highways - LA113 Road drainage and the water environment](#)

NB: We are conscious of the perceived gap in the learning content to support DMRB.

We have requested ICE's training arm, Thomas Telford - to advise as to when we can expect a new learning event that incorporates the new DMRB sections. We previously commissioned a two-day (ICE accredited) DMRB event back in 2019.

Julia May has been visiting some Service Improvement Groups to ascertain whether there are areas of interest relating to DMRB sections that the MHA+ could commission 'bite size' webinars for. Bite size events could include:

- Introduction to the new DMRB (building on the bite size, but still an overview)
- Highway design – probably in a couple of modules – alignment, junctions, cross sections etc
- Structures – maintenance would be key for LA's
- Pavement
- Drainage
- Streetlighting and comms
- Environmental assessment – biodiversity, noise, water environment

Please advise [Julia May](#) as to whether these would be of interest or suggest other content.

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## Horizon scanning and industry updates

A summary of recently published reports, guidance, research, and engagement opportunities are outlined below:

- **Call for transport leaders to help 'super-charge' skills and build the future workforce** - the DfT consultation on transport work force was launched in early February. The government is calling for industry leaders and the wider public to help find and train the next generation of transport leaders.  
  
A **12-week consultation** will help to better understand the future skills needed to boost diversity, plug the skills gap and promote careers across the industry, with participants able to post their views and ideas.  
  
A new taskforce, launched during National Apprentice Week 2022, will lead the charge on promoting careers and aims to create thousands of opportunities for the next generation of talent.
- **Highway Code update 2022: Changes aim to protect vulnerable road users** - the Highway Code which outlines advice and rules for British road users changed at the end of January with new guidance that will protect vulnerable road users, including a Hierarchy of Road Users and a minimum 1.5-metre passing distance
- **Launch of the new executive agency, Active Travel England (ATE)** which builds on the government's commitment to boost cycling and walking and deliver a healthy, safe and carbon-neutral transport system.
- **West Midlands Local Transport Plan consultation launched** - TfWM is supporting the WMCA to update its Local Transport Plan (LTP). They have developed a draft Core Strategy for the new LTP that proposes a new vision for travel in the West Midlands where people can thrive without having to drive or own a car. They are currently seeking views on the draft Core Strategy with the consultation running until 4 April 2022.
- The Transport Select Committee calls for an honest conversation on **road pricing**. That is the conclusion of a **report from the Transport Select Committee** which warns government that it faces a £35 billion a year financial black hole if it doesn't act now to develop a new system of motoring taxation.

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For enquiries about this bulletin or to suggest any future articles please contact [Jacqui Wooldridge / Karen Notman](#).

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