

UK Project Management Round Up¹



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INTRODUCTION

In previous years, I have used this report to review what has happened in the project world in the year just passed. I departed from this approach last year and it seems somehow inappropriate this year, too, as it has been such a difficult time for most people. Instead, I'll focus on recent good news events

GOOD NEWS

The most important good news is that we are now into 2022 and in the immortal words of that wonderful centurion Capt Sir Tom Moore, *Tomorrow will be a better day!* You may recall that Capt Tom, as is fondly remembered, departed this life in February 2021 but not before he captured the Nation's attention by fund raising for our National Health Service (NHS) but walking 100 laps of his garden before his 100th birthday. He aimed to raise £1000 but when his personal project was publicized, went on to raise a staggering £32.79 million (worth almost £39 million with expected tax rebates). His amazing life is briefly recounted at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Captain_Tom_Moore. While we mourn his departure, we should reflect on a good life well lived, and a motto reflecting the attitude of his generation and that of many project people.

This has also been a good year for education, and for professional education in particular.

- The Association for Project Management (APM) has announced a new certification that reflects the professional nature of project management. The Major Project Leadership Specialist Certificate. Aimed at those involved in what APM describe as projects with significant risks and benefits or have macro impact, e.g. leading to significant political, social, economic, technological, organisational transformation, legal, or environmental change.

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The target market is project professionals who have delivered in a leadership capacity on a major project. See whether you fit the profile at

<https://www.apm.org.uk/qualifications-and-training/major-project-leadership-specialist-certificate/>

- Project Management Apprenticeships continue to attract strong support. APM qualifications are built into English and Scottish apprenticeships. In England and Wales, these are at Level 4 (Associate PM) and Level 6 (PM Integrated Degree). The Scottish qualification is the PM Technical Apprenticeship. Details of all these can be found at <https://www.apm.org.uk/qualifications-and-training/apprenticeships/>.

DECEMBER EVENTS

The run up to Christmas is always a busy period and this year with a little more freedom allowed by national Governments, APM held their first hybrid Fellows Forum. These events are intended to brief Fellow members of APM on key policy aspects. Previous fora have covered national economic outlook, COVID impact on projects and sustainability. BC – Before Covid – these were face to face but needs must when the situation changes so recent ones have been on-line. There are pros such as wider reach, less travel time and recordings for later use but also many cons, the lack of networking opportunities, more time out of the office, travel etc. So a hybrid event tries to maximise the benefits while minimising the negatives.



Debbie Lewis

The theme at the December event was APM policy. Fellows heard from President, **Sue Kershaw**, Board of Trustees, **Debbie Lewis** on the strategy review and its implementation. It was also a first opportunity for many to meet new CEO **Prof Adam Boddison** who briefed on the challenges facing the project management profession over the next 5 to 10 years. Citing a recent APM survey, Prof Boddison highlighted climate change as the critical long term issue. This built on the briefing paper by the late Prof Peter Morris and reinforced the messages emerging from COP26. The event, held at the prestigious Law Society in London, enabled those

present to share views with peers and senior APM representatives. Held exclusively for APM Fellows – individuals who have made exceptional, demonstrable, and significant contributions to project management or to the project management profession – the event provides opportunities for delegates to network and

Speaking of hybrid events, APM celebrated its annual Awards at a highly successful event at Old Billingsgate, in the City of London. The full list of winners can be seen at <https://www.apm.org.uk/apm-awards/> but it will come as no surprise to learn that a special award was made to the National Health Service Charities Together for their

swift and effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The organisation delivered its COVID-19 Urgent Appeal, which has since allocated £140 million supporting over 600 projects, including over 400 projects benefitting the mental health of NHS staff. This year, the awards covered categories for contribution to PM, specific project types, individuals and innovation. In all some 16 Awards were made.



The overall Project of the Year went to **Medica Ltd** for their Introducing AI into the teleradiology workflow project. The project's aim was to deploy the qER algorithm, a CT Head product which analyses non contrast studies, flags up possible abnormalities and gives a worklist prioritisation output. This enables critical allocation decisions relating to intracranial haemorrhage to be made, speeding up turnaround times and improving clinical outputs for patients. The project was successful and qER went live in December 2020.

STIRLING PRIZE

The 25th Royal British Architects Association (RIBA) winner has been announced – Grafton Architects' **Kingston University London - Town House** was the winner. Described as “a progressive new model for the design of higher education buildings, the dynamic student ‘Town House’ expertly captures the spirit of learning and the value of community cohesion”.



Image © Denis Gilbert

According to the Award website, Grafton Architects have designed a purposefully democratic and open space, as its name suggests: Town – referring to the building's civic dimension, and House – reflecting a sense of home and belonging. Half of the students at Kingston are the first in their family to attend university and this building sends an important message to them, their

educators and the local community, that this is a place where everyone is welcome and valued.

PROJECT SUCCESSES

Hornsea Wind Farms. The world's largest wind farm should power up by the time you read this report. Some 55 miles off the Yorkshire coast, **Hornsea Project Two** lies alongside Hornsea 1 and will be followed by projects Three and Four. The latest project has a 1.3 Gigawatts capacity and can provide enough to electricity to power 1.3 million homes. The project employs 165 Siemens Gamesa 8MW SG 8.0-167 DD turbines which will deliver 20% more annual output than those used for the 1.2 Gigawatt **Hornsea One**, which was the world's largest when it was completed in late 2019.



The majority of the blades will be delivered from the Siemens Gamesa factory in Hull. The project will use the world's largest offshore substation to deliver electricity from offshore wind to millions of UK homes.

A Round Three project in The Crown Estate's seabed leasing strategy, Hornsea One and Two are in production, with the first having already unofficially brought the 'world's largest' title to their operations and maintenance

base at Grimsby. Hornsea Three is currently awaiting a consent decision from the new Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Andrea Leadsom. Danish renewables giant Ørsted is bringing forward the final wind farm in its allocated zone off the Humber as it investigates a further 600 sq km of seabed for another 180 turbine addition to the Humber cluster.

Archaeological Achievement Awards showcase the best in UK and the Republic of Ireland archaeology. A central event in the annual archaeological calendar, the awards were established in 1976, and now encompass six Awards. There is an overall outstanding achievement award, which went to Cuilcagh to Cleenish Memory Map project. Managed by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, the project also won an award for public dissemination. The Map records over 90 places and stories, including references to battles, rural traditions, archaeological discoveries and natural history. The map beat 84 other entries from the UK and Ireland to win the Council for British Archaeology's overall Outstanding Achievement Award. The map showcases the heritage, history and culture of the area between Cuilcagh Mountain and Cleenish, linking the communities of Bellanaleck, Arney, Killesher and Florencecourt.

HAIL AND FAREWELL

In these all too unhealthy times, it is inevitable that we lose some of our dearest and most illustrious project professionals. This year, we lost **Professor Peter Morris**, one of UK's foremost project theorists and an eminent practitioner. I have already reported on our loss but as we turn over a New Year, it is as well to remember that it was Peter who almost single handedly turned project management from what had until his intervention had been considered merely a technical occupation into a profession that becomes almost daily more significant for the world.

Another "great" who has left this mortal coil is Baron Rogers of Riverside CH FRIBA FCSD FREng RA or as he is better known, **Richard Rogers**. Although not a project manager, he designed many wonderful structures that became synonymous with adventurous design and great beauty. It was his designs for the Pompidou Centre in Paris (1971) that brought him into the public eye but later work, including the Lloyds Building (City of London) and the Millennium Dome (London) that confirmed his contribution. Other major works included the Senedd in Cardiff and the European Court of Justice in Strasbourg. Rogers received many honours in his career including two awards by France, Stirling Prize, Golden Lion (Venice) Gold Medal (Wales), Pritzker Architecture Prize, and many lesser awards. His designs allowed some great projects to be undertaken.



The Millennium Dome. Image: © Mark Eaton/Dreamstime.com

STELLAR SUCCESS



JWST aboard an Ariane 5 rocket launches. Photograph: Jm Guillon/ESA/EPA

This project is not strictly British but is such an amazing, complex and life affirming project that it cannot escape reporting here. The **James Webb space telescope** was successfully launched shortly before we closed the year. For anyone who has missed the key briefings, the James Webb Space Telescope (sometimes called JWST or Webb) is an orbiting infrared observatory that will complement and extend the discoveries of the Hubble Space Telescope, with longer wavelength coverage and greatly improved sensitivity. The longer wavelengths enable Webb to look much closer to the beginning of time and to hunt for the unobserved formation of the first galaxies, as well as to look inside dust clouds where stars and planetary systems are forming today.

The project has cost around \$10 billion, thousands of people worldwide have worked on the project over the past 30 years with three major space agencies involved: NASA, the European and the Canadian Space Agencies. According to the Scientific American, “the original budget estimate was a hazy \$1.5 billion to \$3 billion, and its similarly nebulous launch date was, oh, let us say 2010. By that deadline, however, not only had costs risen to \$5 billion but much of the telescope was still on the drawing board; the development of JWST’s myriad foundational new technologies was proving more intractable than planners had imagined. Only a year later the budget had ballooned by 60 percent to \$8 billion—at which point Congress intervened, establishing a cost cap for JWST: \$8 billion, or bust.”

The whole project is incredibly complex from a scientific perspective but in practical terms, it is more than usually risky as there are 433 single points of failure in the unfurling process alone. For a full description of the back story see the report at <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-james-webb-space-telescope-has-launched-now-comes-the-hard-part1/>

CLOSING REMARKS

There can be little doubt that most people in UK will be heartily glad to leave 2021 behind. Although conditions have eased, we have seen some excellent COVID related projects and deaths have become fewer, not all of this is down to good project management. Some of the project direction has been pretty sloppy which leaves the professional project manager in a difficult position. So recent initiatives such as the Independent Projects Authority insistence on qualified senior reporting officers, education and training for senior managers at Säid Business School and APM’s new Major projects Leadership certificate are all welcome. There is, however, much still to be done before we get ourselves into a position where success can be expected, if not guaranteed.

And now to end on a high! Regular readers will recall my reports on the expansion of cricket, and in particular, its emergence in USA. Older readers may recall that in the 18th Century, cricket was highly popular, reaching a high point at about the time of the Civil War. It has declined in popularity since then but has made a welcome return in recent years. Historically minded readers will find an interesting account of US Cricket at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_United_States_cricket.

Now, I can report a remarkable achievement. Shortly before Christmas, the US Cricket team ended the year by recording their first win over an ICC full member team when they beat Ireland by 26 runs in the T20 series. Ireland recovered on Christmas Eve with a 9 run victory.

Disappointingly, the first One Day International scheduled for Boxing Day (26 Dec for those who are not so blessed) has been cancelled due to COVID.



And so, as one year ends and another begins, let us all hope that the words of Capt Tom will ring true and that *Tomorrow will be a Good Day*. The important thing to remember is that Project Managers are responsible for making that come true!

About the Author



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Miles Shepherd is an executive editorial advisor and international correspondent for PM World Journal in the United Kingdom. He is also managing director for MS Projects Ltd, a consulting company supporting various UK and overseas Government agencies, nuclear industry organisations and other businesses. Miles has over 30 years' experience on a variety of projects in UK, Eastern Europe and Russia. His PM experience includes defence, major IT projects, decommissioning of nuclear reactors, nuclear security, rail and business projects for the UK Government and EU. His consulting work has taken him to Japan, Taiwan, USA and Russia. Past Chair and Fellow of the Association for Project Management (APM), Miles is also past president and chair and a Fellow of the International Project Management Association (IPMA). He was, for seven years, a Director for PMI's Global

Accreditation Centre and is immediate past Chair of the ISO committee developing new international standards for Project Management and for Program/Portfolio Management. He is currently Chairman of the British Standards Institute project management committee. He was involved in setting up APM's team developing guidelines for project management oversight and governance. Miles is based in Salisbury, England and can be contacted at miles.shepherd@msp-ltd.co.uk.