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News

Construction Manager of the Year crowned

Grant Prior

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Frank Connolly of Mace has been named Construction Manager of the Year for his successful delivery of the 13-storey Centre Building for the London School of Economics (LSE).

Connolly beat 60 other finalists across nine categories in the awards run by the Chartered Institute of Building.

He oversaw the two-year construction of the £82m home for political sciences which is the largest building commissioned in the LSE's 125-year history.

Maintaining a 'business as usual' campus with students forming their own paths through the site was one of the many challenges facing Connolly.

The job also had a number of archaeology issues and was almost at tender stage when Brexit happened sending product prices soaring.

But he found solutions that not only saved time but money too.

Connolly de-risked the archaeology that historically has dogged the client's programme in construction projects by co-ordinating the digs with demolition activity.

All archaeology was signed off before the construction phase began as scheduled.

Around 65% of the project was prefabricated, including the steel frame and precast planks, the sprinklers and reception and cafe pods. This move reduced site deliveries, labour requirements and improved overall quality.

Two homeless men sleeping adjacent to the site's entrance were discovered to both be skilled construction workers who had not managed to find work upon entry to the UK.

Within a week the team had secured them temporary accommodation and employment on Mace construction sites.

Following the announcement at the virtual awards event, Connolly said: "What a fantastic honour to have received this prestigious award, something I had dreamt about for many years.

"Thank you CIOB for your perseverance and determination to ensure these awards took place. This was a special project delivered to exacting standards, and something I am very proud of."

Caroline Gumble, CIOB Chief Executive said: "The Construction Manager of the Year competition seeks out the very best of leadership and talent in our sector and this year is no exception.

"Frank Connolly's work was outstanding, with judges commending his 'leadership, passion and commitment'.

"Construction managers are instinctively problem-solvers, who can juggle conflicting priorities and oversee a huge range of issues, including the maintenance of quality standards, the large investment from a client, the health and wellbeing of their co-workers and the interests of the local community.

"Frank's efforts are a shining example for what the best of construction can offer. He's both hugely talented and humble and an inspiration during this particularly challenging time."

For the full list of winners click [here](#).