

YOUR GUIDE TO COP26

October 2021

A large graphic element consisting of several overlapping, curved bands in shades of blue and yellow, sweeping across the middle of the page.

COP26

What is COP26?

COP stands for Conference of the Parties, and will be attended by countries that signed the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC) – a treaty agreed in 1994.

The 2021 meeting will be the 26th meeting which is why it's called "**COP26**".

Postponed by a year owing to the pandemic, it now takes place in Glasgow, Scotland from 31 October to 12 November 2021. It is now a hybrid event, with most, if not all, sessions and events streamed over the internet.

As well as bringing politicians and diplomats from around the world together to make tangible progress on climate change, the two week event will also host a "**green zone**" featuring youth groups, civil society, academia, artists, and businesses from across the UK. ACE is supporting the **Construction Leadership Council's** (CLC's) work bringing the wider-industry together for a session as part of the green zone's programme.

In addition a number of unofficial but related "fringe" events are taking place ahead or around the conference which relate to climate change and action on Net Zero, this includes the UK Green Building Council's **Build Better Now** which both ACE and EIC are founding partners of.

 Find out more about official proceedings at the [COP26 website](#).

What is it trying to achieve?

The ambitious strapline for the event is that it is "uniting the world to tackle climate change" and while that may be correct, in terms of climate diplomacy it will probably be seeking more practical outcomes, notably a **global commitment to Net Zero by 2050**.

Additional outcomes listed on their website include, ensuring we can adapt to protect communities and natural habitats, mobilise finance for climate change, and work collaboratively across society to achieve these aims.

 Director of Policy, **Matthew Farrow** has outlined the political questions for COP26 in a [blog published on the ACE website](#).

Why should my business care?

For ACE members and many EIC members, it is core to their operations. The built environment and construction sectors account for 38% of global carbon emissions. As such, any decisions reached at COP26 will eventually impact on ACE members directly. As the designers of the world of tomorrow, members will be key to unlocking this Net Zero future and our experiences in the UK can help to shape responses around the globe.

The services provided by both ACE and EIC members, renowned internationally for their ingenuity and problem solving skills, will be in high demand as we move towards a more sustainable built environment.

 **Dr Sarah Prichard**, managing director UK at Buro Happold, and chair of ACE and EIC's joint **Net Zero group**, blogs on the [business opportunities for members](#).

What's happening over the fortnight?

Green Zone events:

Alongside the climate diplomacy, the COP 26 Green Zone will take place at Glasgow's Science Centre. Bringing together youth groups, civil society, academia, artists, and businesses from all over the world, the Centre will host more than 200 events, over 100 exhibitions, as well as performances, workshops and talks.

 Tickets for the [COP26 Green Zone are now available](#) and will need to be booked in advance.

 Most events will also be streamed via the [COP26 YouTube channel](#).

Please note ACE and EIC are not responsible for the content of these events which we have shared with members. More for all of the selected highlights below can be found in the [Green Zone section of the COP26 website](#).

Cities and the built environment:

<p>Thursday 4 November 2021 9:30am to 11:00am</p> <p>Science Show Theatre</p>	<p>Commercial buildings: A real asset in addressing climate change? Better Buildings Partnership</p> <p>Significant investment will be needed to decarbonise commercial buildings and make real estate assets resilient to the physical impacts of climate change. This event will provide an insight into the critical role that the commercial real estate sector plays in addressing climate change, highlighting some of the toughest challenges and exploring how meaningful progress can be accelerated.</p>
<p>Tuesday 9 November 2021 4:00pm to 5:30pm</p> <p>Science Show Theatre</p>	<p>The North West presents: Talking about my generation Net Zero North West</p> <p>The North West of England is different. It is a region with innovation and change in its DNA. From the industrial revolution of the 1800's to the cultural revolution of the 1960's, from Andre Geim to John Lennon, this is a place which drives change through action. Their response to the climate crisis follows this same path.</p> <p>Hosted by journalist Paul Mason, the event brings the North West metro mayors together, Steve Rotheram and Andy Burnham, with the innovators who have driven change over the past generation and those who are set to take on that mantle in the crucial decades to come.</p>
<p>Wednesday 10 November 2021 5:00pm to 6:00pm</p> <p>Cinema Auditorium</p> <p>Read more >></p>	<p>Climate Challenge Cup innovation showcase and awards Climate Challenge Cup</p> <p>Hear about innovative and scalable projects that are helping communities become more resilient to the effects of climate change, from wildfires to extreme flooding. You will also hear from partnerships helping cities achieve their Net Zero target.</p>

<p>Thursday 11 November 2021 9:30am to 11:00am</p> <p>Cinema Auditorium</p> <p>Find out more >></p>	<p>Construction: the built environment Construction Leadership Council (CLC)</p> <p>Come and learn how the Construction Leadership Council's ConstructZero industry-change programme is targeting the most impactful actions to mitigate this, leading the industry's charge to meeting the Prime Minister's 2035 Net Zero target.</p> <p>The event will be co-chaired by Sarah Linnell of ACE member Cundall, a Sustainability Engineer and young professional, and will also feature the Prime Minister's Net Zero champion, Andrew Griffith MP.</p> <p>Actuate UK, Saint Gobain and the Construction Industry Council (CIC) will share how they, as ConstructZero partners, are already advancing the importance of retrofit, materials, and design/professional services in delivering Net Zero. Business Champions Keltbray, Travis Perkins, as well as ACE members Atkins and Costain, will identify some of the major challenges they face, and share best practice.</p> <p>Finally, 'Building a Greener Britain' will be premiered. This short film created for COP26 reaches out into local communities, demonstrating some of the great work taking place across the sector up and down the land.</p>
<p>Thursday 11 November 2021 9:30am to 11:00am</p> <p>Tower Base North</p>	<p>Disability, Resilience and Inclusion in our Cities – inclusive design and community-led urban solutions for disability-inclusive climate resilience Global Disability Innovation Hub</p> <p>The design and planning of urban built environments and infrastructure has a crucial role in achieving a more equitable and resilient future. Considering disability inclusion in the design of solutions will create opportunities for resilience and ensure marginalised groups are not left behind. Inclusive design must be sustainable, and sustainable design must be inclusive – for people and planet. Join us to be part of the conversation.</p>
<p>Thursday 11 November 2021 9:30am to 10:30am</p> <p>Science Show Theatre</p>	<p>How buildings will play a role in fighting climate change South West College</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, a brand-new passive house campus is pushing the boundaries of sustainable design and energy efficient building. The New Erne Campus is already celebrated internationally, with a series of record-breaking achievements. Providing a living laboratory for students and industry to learn, experiment and develop new ideas and technologies, the Erne Campus represents an innovative demonstration of how to successfully construct an energy efficient and cost effective zero energy building with passive house principles and renewables.</p>

<p>Thursday 11 November 2021 5:00pm to 6:00pm</p> <p>Tower Base North</p>	<p>How can we decarbonise our built world: lessons from experiments across the world Icebreaker One</p> <p>A panel discussion on lessons from the frontline of building decarbonisation innovation, and the role of energy data in achieving it. The panel will bring together speakers who are actively engaged in tackling this challenge from different perspectives and geographies.</p> <p>The event will see them present their findings so far, share lessons, and examine what action is needed in future to ensure that the built world can radically reduce emissions. The panel will bring together frontline innovators with real experience of success and failure, and hard-won advice for policymakers on what is needed in the decade ahead.</p>
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Transport:

<p>Wednesday 10 November 2021 4:00pm to 5:00pm</p> <p>Tower Base North</p>	<p>Women leaders across the globe transforming street design Living Streets</p> <p>The way we travel around our towns and cities is changing. Reducing motor use and increasing walking, wheeling and cycling is key to reducing carbon emissions. Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking, is bringing together women from across the globe to showcase how changes to street infrastructure can change travel behaviours in a positive way for the environment, our health and local economies.</p>
<p>Wednesday 10 November 2021 3:30pm to 5:00pm</p> <p>Cinema Auditorium</p>	<p>Talking about Our Generation: putting younger generations in charge of the switch to sustainable energy & transportation National Grid</p> <p>Following a film premiere with Fully Charged and National Grid where young people document their hopes, dreams and fears for climate change, we invite you to join a riveting panel, with TV presenter Robert Llewellyn speaking to youngsters as we put them in charge of the switch to sustainable energy and transportation.</p>
<p>Wednesday 10 November 2021 3:30pm to 5:30pm</p> <p>Cinema Auditorium</p>	<p>Speeding up the clean transport revolution Count Us In</p> <p>Organised by global movement Count Us In, we'll discuss and reflect on progress and solutions, and send a message to policymakers – step on the accelerator to bid the combustion engine farewell!</p>
<p>Wednesday 10 November 2021 5:00pm to 6:00pm</p> <p>Tower Base South</p>	<p>People make transport: communities enabling greener travel Sustainable Transport Alliance</p> <p>This event will include colourful examples that paint an inspiring picture of pathways to clean, green, equitable travel. Our panel of experts will engage in a lively debate, taking questions and comments from the audience to relate our experiences to other locations globally, sharing ideas, thinking and positivity around what we have to gain from cleaner transport.</p>

Energy:

<p>Thursday 4 November 2021 3:30pm to 5:00pm</p> <p>Cinema Auditorium</p>	<p>Hydro: Powering a Net Zero future SSE</p> <p>'Hydro: Powering a Net Zero Future' is a film celebrating the rich heritage of hydro power and looking ahead to its vital role in combating climate change. The film will look at the transformative social and economic impact hydro power had on the north of Scotland following WW2, the continued role it plays and the potential for this almost 80-year-old technology to support a decarbonised electricity grid.</p>
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Technology:

<p>Wednesday 10 November 2021 6:00pm to 8:00pm</p> <p>Cinema Auditorium</p>	<p>Tech For Our Planet: Digital Solutions for Climate Challenges PUBLIC</p> <p>Technology has enormous potential to help us fight climate change. However, start-ups and innovators working to create digital solutions struggle to gain traction through partnership with government, secure investment and find the right 'front doors' for their technology to be most useful. Tech For Our Planet is an exciting new challenge programme – run in partnership by PUBLIC and the Cabinet Office – identifying leading tech start-ups and entrepreneurs creating solutions to help us tackle climate change.</p>
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How are ACE and EIC getting involved?

The initial plan had been for a number of fringe events hosted by ACE and EIC. However, owing to the pandemic we scaled back these ideas in favour of supporting activities by industry partners including the **Construction Leadership Council (CLC)** and the **UK Green Building Council**.

However, we also see our role as ensuring ACE and EIC members are kept up-to-date with COP26 developments, recognising member contributions where possible, and providing opportunities to get involved in the topic through access to events and opportunities for engagement.

This guide is our first major output supporting members looking to explore how they can make the most of COP26.

In addition ACE, EIC and Infrastructure Intelligence, will be hosting a range of Net Zero events, guides and reports between now and COP26 and sharing a number of blogs from industry thought-leaders.

- Keep up-to-date with the [latest on COP26 by visiting ACE's website](#).
- Download [your copy of the ACE and EIC guide to Net Zero in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland](#).
- Book your free place at our COP/Net Zero related webinars: [Performance based design & climate change](#) (22 October), [Delivering Net Zero in Scotland](#) (27 October) and [Making the Most of COP26](#) (26 November).
- Keep an eye out for ACE Emerging Professionals' Climate Changing my Job (coming soon!).
- Make sure you read the blogs from [Matthew Farrow](#) (ACE and EIC). Blogs from **Dr Sarah Prichard** (Buro Happold and NZ group chair) and **Thomas Worthington** (Atkins and ACE EP) are coming soon.
- Is your business organising a related event (or something else)? [Get in touch today](#). 📧

Build Better Now

Following the daily themes of the official COP26 presidency programme with a focus on the built environment, the **UK Green Building Council's** Build Better Now campaign officially launches at the end of October. ACE and EIC are founding partners and member **AECOM** is a technical delivery partner.

As well as a virtual pavilion which shines a spotlight on innovative and sustainable ideas for cities, buildings and infrastructure, a series of events mirror COP26's programme providing another platform for further discussion and opportunities to get involved. [Find out more on our site.](#)

Please note ACE is not responsible for the content of the website, nor these events. Full speaker line-ups are still to be confirmed as of time of writing.



COP26 BUILT ENVIRONMENT VIRTUAL PAVILION

BUILD BETTER NOW

31ST OCTOBER - 12TH NOVEMBER

Register your interest in the **events programme** to discover how a more responsible and sustainable built environment is within our grasp.

BE PART OF THE TRANSFORMATION AT BUILD BETTER NOW

 [Find out more about the events below and on the dedicated website](#)

1 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	A Pledge for COP26: The critical role of cities in meeting climate ambitions
2 November 8:00am to 9:00am	A human future: a new skills paradigm for our transition to a Net Zero future
2 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	How can smart flexible buildings help us reach Net Zero?
3 November 8.00am to 9.00am	Building Net Zero: mobilising capital for a sustainable built environment
3 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	Decarbonising the UK's housing stock: finding the £250bn
4 November 8:00am to 9:00am	The retrofit opportunity
4 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	Sustainable city regions: How can we enable zero-carbon living at scale?

5 November 8:00am to 9:00am	Empowering young people to become climate aware Built environment professionals of the future – what do we need to do now?
5 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	Why circularity should be your route to Net Zero
6 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	Designing a green and resilient built environment – what do we need to do now and in the future?
8 November 8:00am to 9:00am	Quantifying the costs of inaction – the measurement and report of physical climate risks to built assets
8 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	Race to resilience: How to finance the built asset adaptation gap
9 November, 8.00am to 9.00am	Safe, sustainable & healthy – the relationship between building safety reform, sustainability and wellbeing
9 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	Innovation at the heart of a zero carbon built environment
10 November 12:00pm to 1:00pm	Planning for transport and connectivity: how do we build holistic net zero and resilient places of the future?

Pre-COP business briefings

The **Cabinet Office** is running two pre-COP business briefing sessions. Open to any business around the globe it will provide an opportunity to hear from senior UK officials on their plans for COP and what is happening in both the “blue” and “green” zones of the Conference.

In order to accommodate businesses joining from different time zones, there are two briefings with the same content. **These are free to any ACE or EIC member to attend.**

- [Wednesday 20 October, 9:00am to 10:00am.](#)
- [Thursday 21 October 4:30pm to 5:30pm](#)

Where can I find out more?

- [COP26 official website](#)
- [COP26 official channel on YouTube](#)
- [COP26 on ACE's website](#) and [Net Zero on ACE's website](#)
- [Green Building Council UK's Build Better Now website](#)
- [COP26 on CLC's website](#)

Questions?

Questions can be directed to James Ketchell, Head of Communications at ACE and EIC by email - jketchell@acenet.co.uk.

Please note that all content within this guide was correct as of time of publication, **21 October 2021** but may have since changed.

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