

## An Irish construction leader's perspective on why BIM certification has been good for business

**“We benefit from our clients seeing us as an certified body and a partner who takes their business seriously.”**

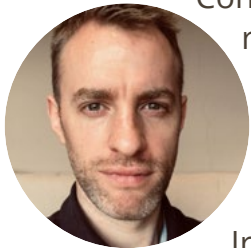
RAY BLEWITT, HEAD OF DIGITAL CONSTRUCTION AT JOHN PAUL CONSTRUCTION



**NSAI**

## Building clarity and confidence with BIM

*An interview with Ray Blewitt, head of digital construction at John Paul Construction*



Founded in Ireland in 1949, John Paul Construction has grown to a giant, recognised for delivering complex projects across all sectors, internationally. But one of its areas of strategic focus is close to home: contributing to Ireland's Housing Strategy and Project Ireland 2040 by providing top-quality residential housing units.

As John Paul Construction's head of digital construction, Ray Blewitt helps drive the firm's ongoing pursuit of performance improvement. Building information modelling (BIM) certification – and the audits that come with it – have helped the company continually refine its internal processes, and collaborate more efficiently with its clients and supply chain partners.

### Reaping reputational advantages

John Paul Construction took on its first BIM project in 2017, and achieved ISO 19650-2 certification in 2018 – the first main contractor in Ireland to do so.

Ray explains: *“BIM certification showed our future-focused, innovation-driven approach. It tells your clients you're organised and can follow an international standard, and lets them know what to expect.”*

### Clarifying roles and responsibilities

For John Paul Construction, the power of ISO 19650-2 – and information management in general – is its focus on people, establishing roles and responsibilities. BIM comes into play early on, setting out who is supposed to be doing what, and when things are supposed to be delivered, helping avoid later conflict.

*“BIM is all about the right information to the right person at the right time,”* says Ray.

The John Paul Construction teams distribute BIM documentation through all of their commercial discussions – which helps set deliverables.

*“This removes the potential for confusion – people know what they must deliver and can move on to the next step.”*



## Supporting Housing

By providing a framework that keeps documentation consistent, detailed and organised from the beginning, BIM enables a thorough handover at the end of a project. Ray has found this crucial when working on social housing units.

*"It gives the client – in this case the Government or the Land Development Agency – certainty that what they're getting is top quality. And good handover information is the basis for future operations and maintenance."*

## Transferring certification

John Paul Construction was initially BIM-certified through another organisation, but decided to transfer its certification to NSAI to benefit from a more local connection.

The firm achieved recertification through NSAI's dedicated BIM Department, which works closely with the body's Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) Department and its Sustainability and Built Environment Department.

*"We realised from a credentials perspective and a local support perspective that it made sense to pursue our certification with NSAI – it's a well-respected organisation we work with on other certifications as well," says Ray.*

*"We foster a collaborative, communicative environment, and felt working with a local certification body was a better fit for those values."*

## Benefitting from audits

For Ray, John Paul Construction's first surveillance audit reinforced the value of certification through NSAI.

*"An audit keeps you honest," says Ray. "It challenges you to maintain high standards of project delivery on your sites. And with NSAI, it's very clear. It's a day-long audit, with good feedback along the way, and then your report afterwards."*

*"The NSAI has really strong auditors – people with actual industry backgrounds who know what they're talking about. They're not just looking for non-compliance. They identify opportunities for improvement, and share insights."*

## Words of wisdom

Ray encourages any construction businesses considering BIM certification to start the process sooner rather than later.

ISO 19650 series requirements are being phased into Ireland's Capital Works Management Framework. *"Within a couple of years,"* Ray explains, *"all public projects are going to be done through BIM."*

He assures firms they can find the support they need to start their BIM journey.

*"In addition to upskilling your team, consider your recruitment options. There are also government-funded initiatives creating helpful reference material."*

Ray has been involved with standards-related work at one of those initiatives, Build Digital.

*"There are people out there who can help you do it, and all the information is available. So start with a small project, take it step by step, and see how you go."*

**JohnPaul.ie**

**+ The BIM collections of standards – an initiative of NSAI, Build Digital and the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) – is available at discounted rates at [Standards.ie](https://standards.ie). And to learn more about BIM certification for your business, email NSAI's BIM team at [BIM@nsai.ie](mailto:BIM@nsai.ie).**



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