

PRESS RELEASE

New CIOB President calls for unification on climate change and over-urbanisation

'We need to be building bridges, not putting up walls', says CIOB's First US-based President

High resolution imagery available upon request

Chris Soffe FCIOB, CEO of Gleeds Americas, has become the 115th President of the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB).

In his first public address, at the CIOB's President's Dinner in Toronto on **12 July 2018**, he will stress why climate change and collaboration among institutions will be two of his key focus areas over the next 12 months.

"Our global society faces huge challenges in terms of increasing urbanisation, outdated infrastructure, climate change and much more – but we are only going to solve them by working together," says Atlanta-based Soffe, who officially becomes the institute's first US president on 9 July 2018. *"We need to be building bridges, not putting up walls.*

"That applies to the construction industry too," he continues. *"These challenges have to be met by several institutions working together, including the CIOB. It is important that the institutions' various initiatives coalesce with the aim of achieving common goals for the industry."*

Chris has been President and CEO of Gleeds Americas since 1991. He oversees Gleeds operations in the region, building relationships with partners across the globe.

"At a time when innovation in cost and environmental efficiency is greatly needed, we are delighted at Gleeds that Chris has been appointed as President of the CIOB. Chris' experience and network will play a pivotal role in unifying and harnessing the power of creative minds and institutions, future talent and technology worldwide, propelling the industry's future growth", said Richard Steer, Worldwide Chairman, Gleeds.

UK-born Soffe, who has recently obtained dual citizenship, sees these infrastructure and urbanisation challenges at first hand in his home city.

"In the 30 years I have been in Atlanta, the population has grown from 2.7 million to 6.5 million, and the traffic congestion is terrible," he says. *"We've been trying to pave*

our way out of the problem but it's not the solution. We are big proponents of expanding rapid transit systems, a far more sustainable approach to urban transport, but that's not happening here at present."

On sustainability, Chris Soffe said: *"We can't have that head-in-the-sand attitude on climate change,"* he says. *"There may be a perception that the US has turned its back on the environment because the administration has said it would withdraw from the Paris Agreement, but that's not true. California and other states will adopt its goals regardless of what the federal government says. Also, at a project level, we are delivering greener and greener projects, which is what clients want."*

His high-profile projects include advising on the reconstruction cost of the World Trade Centre's Twin Towers after 9/11 – valued at \$6.5Bn – and working with International Speedway Corporation on the \$400 M grandstand redevelopment of the famed Daytona International Speedway in Florida.

Prior to Gleeds, Chris worked overseas in the UK, Tanzania, Trinidad and the Bahamas. During his 28 years in the USA, he has acted as project and cost management advisor to corporate property owners, developers, government agencies and institutions.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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We accredit university degrees, educational courses and training. Our professional and vocational qualifications are a mark of the highest levels of competence and professionalism, providing assurance to clients and other professionals procuring built assets.

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