

# CIHT Dubai Group Newsletter

## Welcome

**Dear CIHT Dubai Members,**

Welcome to this, our second issue of the CIHT Dubai Group Newsletter, published at the end of a tumultuous year.



This month marks 12 months since the Dubai Group was first established. We are pleased that despite various challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we made good progress in serving a growing membership and community of interested highways and transport professionals in Dubai and the United Arab Emirates. Like many others, we have achieved this by adapting our activities and going online for many of our events. This has enabled us to attract interest and participation from well beyond the UAE's borders and appeal to a wider audience.

Within this month's newsletter you will find details of the current Dubai Committee, information on evening seminars held in the past few months, an update on membership and professional qualifications, a profile of one of our members, what has been happening in the transport space in Dubai and a brief look ahead on what's coming in 2021.

The Dubai Group exists to organise technical, membership and social events which share and develop knowledge, ideas and skills amongst highways and transport professionals in the UAE. We extend our thanks to all those who have helped us in this goal over the past few months through membership, service, or other voluntary contributions.

## CIHT Dubai Group

The CIHT Dubai Group currently consists of 11 full Committee Members, all volunteers, who meet once a month to discuss the Group's ongoing progress, and to plan and organise future events. There around 120 full CIHT Members in the UAE. Additional support is always welcome so if you wish to get involved in the Committee, please get in touch.

<b>Chair</b> .....	Jonathan Spear	<b>Web and Data</b> .....	Brindha Sankari
<b>Vice Chair</b> .....	Martin Tillman	<b>Committee Member</b> .....	Nebras Al Radaideh
<b>Secretary</b> .....	Prathyush Menon	<b>Committee Member</b> .....	Ed Forrester
<b>Events Coordinator</b> .....	Jodie Mairs	<b>Committee Member</b> .....	Adel Armool
<b>Membership &amp; Development</b> .....	Andrew Jenkins	<b>Committee Member</b> .....	Yara Al Hamdan
<b>CIHT UK Liaison</b> .....	Michelle Wood		

In forming the CIHT Dubai Group, we are keen to represent and raise the standards of the highways and transport planning and engineering profession locally. The main aims of the Group are as follows:

- To act as a forum for highways and transport professionals in Dubai and the UAE.
- To promote professional standards which enhance the capacity of Dubai's transport sector.
- To provide a local focus for CIHT to provide services and support to members.
- To become an active and self-sustaining branch of CIHT, contributing to the profile of the Institution.
- To promote wider professional, academic and social collaboration and learning with other bodies.
- To lay the basis for further CIHT activity in the UAE and wider Region.

This newsletter is published twice a year by the Dubai Group of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT). To subscribe to our newsletter, receive notifications of upcoming seminars, give us feedback, or find out more about CIHT activities, membership and qualifications, contact us via:

General queries: [ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com](mailto:ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com)

Branch website: [Dubai | CIHT](https://www.ciht.org.uk)

## Thoughts from the Chair – Reimagining the Future of Transport



*Much of the CIHT Dubai Group's first year has been dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated economic and social crisis. This has resulted in profound impacts for the highways and transport sector, here in Dubai, across the GCC and the World.*

*Earlier this year, with lockdowns in place, demand for transport & mobility fell dramatically. However, many transport professionals across the World have stepped up, kept essential goods and workers moving and done much to maintain services in difficult conditions. As Dubai has reopened, there is now an opportunity to re-imagine the post-COVID world.*

*This includes accelerating key trends, such as digitisation, online services, and automation, as well as renewed commitment to tackling pressing pre-pandemic challenges, such as congestion, pollution, and climate change, with new resolve. This means reconfiguring transport systems and services to drive a better, greener recovery which supports more sustainable, resilient, and happier communities. As we head into 2021, we should look beyond today's trials and tribulations, and focus on preparing well to build the economy and society of tomorrow.*

## Past Events January – December 2020

In our first year, CIHT Dubai Group has successfully organised eight seminars on a wide range of topics.

Quickly adapting to situation brought on by COVID-19, we switched events from a physical venue to an online format. Seminars generally lasted 60 to 90 minutes and consisted of a brief introduction to CIHT and the Dubai Group, one or more presentations, followed by moderated Questions and Answers. The topics covered are as follows:

Month	Seminar	Speakers and Organisations
January	<i>Hyperloop – From Vision to Reality</i>	Harj Dhaliwal, Virgin Hyperloop One
April	<i>FUTURES – A New Approach to Transport Planning in the Age of Disruption</i>	Ed Forrester, Mott MacDonald
June	<i>Acquiring Professional Development and Chartered Qualification in Transport Planning</i>	Michelle Wood, PTRC Andrew Jenkins, Arup
July	<i>Planning, Executing and Responding to Road Safety Audits</i>	David George, Al Ain Municipality Nandeesh Kestur, Abu Dhabi Municipality
August	<i>COVID-19: Impacts, Responses and Opportunities for Transport in the United Arab Emirates</i>	Jonathan Spear, Atkins Nada Jasim, RTA Huda Shaka, Arup Ed Forrester, Mott MacDonald
October	<i>Micromobility – Perspectives on the Mess and Success of a New Mode of Urban Transport</i>	Jonathan Spear, CIHT
November	<i>Acquiring a Professional Qualification in Engineering with CIHT</i>	Michelle Wood, PTRC Fergal Hand, Sreeram Kollipara, Herve Etave
December	<i>Transit-Orientated Development – Connecting the First and Last Mile Dots</i>	Martin Tillman, AECOM

Over 1,100 people have registered for seminars over the year, with an average per seminar of 140. Actual attendance has been nearly 600, with strong & positive feedback from participants. Of those registering:

- 44% were CIHT Members, half (50%) of Non-Members were potentially interested in Membership.
- 77% were male and 23% female.
- 83% were from the private sector, 10% from public agencies and 7% from academia.
- 39% were from Dubai, 38% from wider UAE and GCC, 15% from Europe and 19% from the rest of the World.
- 84% were happy to be contacted by CIHT with further information.

Bulletin Notes have been produced for each seminar and are available on request. If you have a suggest topic for a seminar, or wish to present, please get in touch with the Committee via [ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com](mailto:ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com).

## In Case You Missed it – Details of our Recent Seminars

### August 2020: COVID-19: Impacts, Responses and Opportunities for Transport in the UAE



Following its emergence at the end of 2019, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Coronavirus (COVID-19) an international health emergency on 30th January & global pandemic on 11th March.

With the first local case of COVID-19 recorded on 29th January, the human cost of the pandemic on the UAE and the GCC is real and tangible. Over time, lockdown measures, and associated restrictions on business and personal mobility, have given way to a phased and regulated re-starting of economic and social activity.

The transport sector has had to remain operational throughout the crisis, having a vital role in keeping essential goods and workers moving across the UAE, maintaining the integrity of the supply chain and supporting the wider Government response; it also has a vital role in supporting long-term sustainable economic recovery as Dubai and other Emirates re-open.

As well as challenges, the crisis presents some opportunities. We should not lose sight of what could be done better or differently and how our post-COVID-19 World might benefit as a result. As people, business and communities recover, we are unlikely to go back to the previous “normal” – there will be medium- and long-term implications, in such areas as public transport management, traffic control, working from home, design of the public realm and decarbonisation; and, whilst there are pressing immediate needs, we should start thinking about those now. There is also a need to be better prepared for future pandemics or other crises that may materialise.

This seminar focused on the issues and challenges raised by COVID-19 globally, in the UAE and Dubai. Through four focused presentations from the public and private sectors, different dimensions of the crisis, impacts and responses were explored with time for discussion at the end.

### October 2020: Micromobility – The Mess and Success of a New Mode of Urban Transport



Micromobility is a new concept and refers to small, powered, lightweight personal mobility devices including e-bikes, e-scooters and mini-segways with new products constantly emerging.

The phenomenon of start-up firms offering shared e-scooters for hire has come from nowhere to severely disrupt the urban transport sector. Since 2017, they have spread rapidly to hundreds of cities across the world, securing billions of dollars of private investment, offering citizens and visitors more transport choice and utility, whilst outflanking and putting pressure on the existing agencies which plan, regulate, and operate roads, urban spaces, public and shared mobility.

Three years on, arguments continue to be made, often passionately, by those who advocate and oppose e-scooters. There is a need to balance some of the opportunities with better planning & regulation, and for micromobility to complement other modes within an integrated transport system.

Benefits of e-scooters include time savings, first and last mile connections, low cost, and low environmental footprint. There are also lesser-known benefits such as supporting Mobility as a Service and being a precursor to other future mobility technologies. Ultimately, the debate is about the development of the wider shared economy and associated business models.

There are also challenges such as user safety, modal shift from active modes, parking and street litter, rights to use infrastructure and issues around equity and data access. There have also been past instances of acrimonious relations between operators and authorities which has damaged trust.

With proportionate regulation, effective partnerships between public and private sectors, transparency of data and when managed well within an integrated transport network, e-scooters can help cities make progress against a range of policy goals, and the seminar concluded with a number of recommendations for the future. These may be of interest in Dubai as public e-scooter trials launch in five areas of the Emirate.

### December 2020: Transit Orientated Development – Connecting the First and Last Mile Dots



Transit Orientated Development (TOD) is defined as a high-density, compact, walkable, mixed-use form of development located within close proximity to a public transport station. This seminar provided an overview of the key factors for developing successful TOD and, in particular, how focus on walking, cycling & micromobility can provide socially, environmentally & economically beneficial solutions to ensure a winning TOD solution.

Architect Jan Gehl states that happy cities are transit orientated cities where happiness is linked to the ability of people to socially interact. Developing cities for people requires a reversal of car dependence and vehicle orientated development. In this context, cities such as Vienna, Zurich, Munich, Melbourne & Vancouver have made huge strides to improve public transport, walking and cycling networks and a high-quality public realm.

A key conclusion of the seminar was that Transit Orientated Development is good for cities & good for people. They depend on a dense network of routes and paths, small development block sizes and the incorporation of pedestrian and cycle paths from the beginning, encouraging choice, connectivity, convenience, and wellbeing.

## Membership and Qualifications

Whether you are just starting your career in highways and transportation or are an experienced professional, CIHT can help to support your professional development needs by offering access to professional qualifications which recognise your knowledge and practical experience and improve your chances of progression in your chosen career.

Already a Member? Introduce your colleagues to CIHT!

### Why Become Professionally Qualified?

- ✓ National and international recognition as a professional
- ✓ Greater influence within your organisation and industry
- ✓ Assists career progression
- ✓ Recognition of your knowledge and expertise by colleagues and clients
- ✓ Evidence of your commitment to professional standards

### What Can CIHT Offer?

#### Routes to:

- ✓ Chartered Engineer (CEng)
  - ✓ Incorporated Engineer (IEng)
  - ✓ Engineering Technician (EngTech)
  - ✓ Transport Planning Professional (TPP)
  - ✓ Road Safety Auditing Certificate of Competency (CoC)
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Not sure what Qualification is right for you?

- Go to CIHT Website at [Get Qualified \(ciht.org.uk\)](http://www.ciht.org.uk)
- Complete your Initial Assessment Form online, so CIHT can confirm the options and best route available to you.
- Make sure to include required documents (e.g. Academic Certificates, details of CPD)

**Don't miss out on opportunities. Become a Member today!**

## Training and Mentoring



Over the last six months CIHT Dubai, through Michelle Wood and Andrew Jenkins, has focused on raising awareness of professional training and qualifications in Dubai and the UAE, both amongst CIHT Members and others in the local highways and transport sector. Two seminars have been run; the first, in June, was focused on acquiring a professional qualification in transport planning (Transport Planning Professional, TPP). The second event, held in November, focused on acquiring a professional qualification in engineering (Chartered Engineer, Incorporated Engineer or Engineering Technician).

Both events provided an overview of what is required to gain a professional qualification and what preparation is necessary. The speakers explained the relevance and benefits of having professional qualifications in the Gulf Region. Challenges were also addressed such as awareness of the assessment requirements, who can act as mentors and plans to make qualifications less UK-specific in terms of the knowledge, experience and assessment criteria.

The Dubai Group is working with CIHT Britannia Walk to support applicants locally through the development of a set of mentors in region. Engagement and feedback from individuals and employers who are interested in pursuing professional qualifications is being actively encouraged and the objective is to make access to professional qualifications as flexible and relevant as possible. An example is ongoing work to allow interview presentations via virtual media rather than face to face meetings, removing the need to travel.

More information can be obtained through the CIHT website (<https://www.ciht.org.uk>). Michelle and Andrew would be delighted to hear from you if you are interested in pursuing a professional qualification and would like to discuss mentoring and support through the process. We would also be delighted to hear from senior professionals who are professionally qualified and willing to act as mentors to others.

## Committee Member Profile - Nebras Al Radaideh



### 1. What's your job title and who do you currently work for?

I'm a project control specialist at Parsons.

### 2. Can you briefly summarise your career to date?

I graduated as a civil engineer from Amman, Jordan in 2010 and worked in the construction field, for 4 years, before moving to Dubai. After six years of working in rail, I've developed a true professional passion for this sector.

### 3. What have you worked on to date?

I've been fortunate to work on mega rail and infrastructure projects, including the preliminary design and the construction phase of Route 2020 on the Dubai Metro. I've also worked on several transport programs in Saudi Arabia. Currently, I work on both making proposals and running projects.

With proposal reviews, I'm involved in the risk assessment of taking on projects, including bid/no-bid decisions. These responsibilities have given me key insights into the infrastructure needs in the region and how they can be realised.

### 4. What are the most important issues for the highways and transport sector today?

In my opinion, there are three main issues confronting the highways and transport sector today:

- **Connectivity and Integration.** Public transport systems are often built independently of each other, as well as other transport networks. Therefore, it can be difficult to seamlessly transfer passengers from one system to another. This leads to competing interests between a rider's preference for direct connections, which can be extremely costly to deliver, and their need for an affordable cost-efficient service network that also involves transfers.

- **Flexibility.** Many public transport systems are fixed. However, cities are dynamic in that passengers' travel patterns change over time. This can result in 'spatial obsolescence', and therefore transport services must adapt to new circumstances and needs.
- **Urbanisation.** As our region's cities continue to grow, more cars are being purchased and used, placing an increasingly high demand on the road infrastructure, often more than it is designed to handle. This means more congestion and pollution, as well as rising carbon emissions and concerns around climate change.

### 5. What are your future ambitions?

One of my career goals is to become a strategic rail planner. I would love to build a railway, or a similar transportation system, that caters to people's unique needs from all walks of life.

### 6. What gets you up in the morning?

Working in a dynamic field like ours and knowing we make a vital contribution to the success of society. Supporting future metros, roads, and other infrastructure that makes people's lives easier and more comfortable is what drives me to give my all, each and every day.

### 7. What do you get out of being on the CIHT Dubai Group?

It's a wonderful experience meeting and speaking with decision makers, learning from industry experts, and networking with like-minded professionals. All the success stories we hear are very inspiring. In addition, the free-to-attend monthly webinars have opened my eyes to new and interesting angles to approach my thinking about the industry and some important regional insights.

### 8. If there is one thing you would change about the highways and transport profession what would it be?

I'd like there to be more professional stability, a welcoming and open adoption of new technologies, and an increasing number of training opportunities and exchanges that lead to professional development.

### 9. As a woman working in transport, what advice would you offer to others considering coming into the sector?

Transportation is a domain where men continue to have the greatest number of seats. It wasn't too long ago that I would walk into a project meeting room and be the only woman there.

In the beginning I used to feel quite shy about sharing my opinions, as women aren't necessarily encouraged to take the lead or speak up. However, thankfully I found a lot of support from the men around me. My voice and views have been definitely validated over time. I think a lot of men weren't necessarily used to seeing women climbing the corporate ladder and achieving success in this field.

I have faith that the number of women in leading roles will increase, especially if we continue to work together to help each other realize our dreams by recognising we have similar struggles and obstacles to overcome. We should not be intimidated or scared that this field is tough. We should harness the unique skillsets we have and use these as our foundations for success.

Lastly, we need to develop programs where women can mentor others, so students and graduates can receive the right guidance. CIHT is helping this and it's really wonderful to be part of it.

## In Passing...

News in the highways and transportation sector in Dubai has been dominated, as elsewhere in the World, by COVID-19. The Roads and Transport Authority has successfully implemented a range of preventative and mitigation measures which were detailed during our August online seminar. However, the pandemic has not been the only story and over the year, and there have been a range of other developments in Dubai and the UAE. Here are some of the highlights over the past six months, some of which we hope will feature in our events programme for 2021.



In July, **Dubai Route 2020** was inaugurated as an extension of the Dubai Metro. With a capacity of 23,000 passengers per direction per hour, the 15 Km line features 7 new stations. The latter includes a new interchange with the Red Line, iconic station at Expo 2020 and a link to Al Maktoum International Airport.



In August, Dubai announced plans to transform itself into a **cycle-friendly city**, to support health and wellbeing, smooth traffic and enhance the environment. Plans include new policies and standards, enhanced road safety, public awareness campaigns, new cycle lanes and facilities and support for cycle rental.



Dubai is aiming for a post-COVID "Green Recovery" with ongoing investment in, and promotion of, **Electric Vehicles**. In September, the Supreme Council of Energy raised the target for hybrid and electric vehicles in Government fleets to 30% from 2030. DEWA now has 240 Green Charger stations across the Emirate.



In October, RTA launched trails of **e-scooters** across five areas of Dubai. Each area features smart e-scooter hire by mobile app, designated parking locations & right of way infrastructure. Operator practices, take-up, impacts and user perceptions will be monitored before permanent policy and regulation is made.



In November, the **Dubai Intelligent Traffic Systems Centre** was inaugurated in Al Barsha. Part of the Smart Dubai initiative, the Centre will expand the use of technology and data analytics to monitor and manage traffic, ease congestion, manage incidents and ensure smoother, more reliable roads across the Emirate.



**GITEX Technology Week** was held in Dubai at the beginning of December with a resumption of physical events at the World Trade Centre. Featuring a range of COVID-secure precautions, several mobility and transport innovations were on display, including autonomous and electric vehicles, passenger drones & smart inspection.

## Coming in 2021

As the CIHT Dubai Group heads into 2021, we are already making our plans for the coming year. In particular, with new vaccines, and treatments, we hope COVID-19 will gradually fade away and we will see some return to normality in the first half of the year, in particular in respect of being able to hold physical meetings and events. However, we will also need to consider the longer-term legacy and implications of the pandemic and how these impact the demand for travel, planning principles, technologies and practices,

In 2021, look out for:

- More evening seminars, online and physical, on a range of topics and themes;
- Organised site visits and social events;
- Further mentoring and support for Transport Planning and Engineering Qualifications;
- Half-yearly newsletters;
- Closer engagement with academia, including Student Chapters and equivalent in local universities; and
- A number of highway and transport events planned in Dubai, including UITP MENA Congress, Hypermotion, Dubai Self-Driving Challenge and the IRF Global Meeting.

We are also aiming to further develop the Committee to provide a sustainable basis for moving the Group and its activities forward in future years. We are always looking for volunteers to help this happen so get in touch if you are interested via [ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com](mailto:ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com).