



## Nick Terry 1947–2008

**N**ick Terry, chair of BuildingSMART UK, deputy chair of BuildingSMART International and former Building Design Partnership (BDP) chairman, died peacefully on 30 November 2008, after a year-long battle with cancer. His wide experience, strategic thinking and commitment to collaborative working were of immeasurable benefit to BuildingSMART, while his gentle unassuming ways won him respect and friendship in all quarters.

From leading BDP teams on large projects, Nick became a strong advocate of change in the way projects are run and of the imperative to make design software interoperable.

In his BuildingSMART roles, he became a high-profile champion of integration and collaboration. As chair of BuildingSMART UK, he used his influence in the industry to further the progress of collaborative working. ‘The growing number of consortiums and joint ventures that form to deliver complex projects creates a compelling need to collaborate effectively,’ he wrote in 2007. ‘What we need is seamless communication across the software systems that we all use.’

Building information modelling, using the open IFC standards developed by BuildingSMART, was the enabler. He saw this work as following in the tradition of BDP’s charismatic founder, George Grenfell-Baines, a pioneer of integration between the professions.

Nick’s legacy lies not only within the BuildingSMART organisation but also in the high-profile projects where he led BDP architectural teams. They include the new HQ for Roche Pharmaceuticals in Welwyn, which used IFC technology, the Royal Albert Hall upgrade and the Royal Opera House refurbishment.

Nick was a thoughtful, exceptionally perceptive and kind person. Using his natural leadership qualities, Nick would quietly take charge in situations where he could draw on his resourcefulness and excellent organisational skills. He believed that to be successful you had to take care of the people around you. His calm demeanour, mixed with grit and determination, ensured that, whatever the challenges along the way, they would be overcome.



### Open standards and collaboration



Nick was an influential champion of teamwork and the open IFC standards that make it a reality. ‘IFCs are the smart

way to go, adding value at every stage of the design and construction process, making our entire industry hugely more efficient and profitable’.

Nick was clear-sighted about the rewards of IFC/BIM-based collaboration. He had a powerful vision of the journey towards collaborative working and the importance of the three elements: people, process and technology.

With IFC, Nick argued, ‘we can eliminate the silos and islands of information and instead have a reusable enterprise-wide knowledge base... BuildingSMART is also seen as a key enabler of sustainable design and operation.’

See also obituaries in the *Guardian* and *The Times*:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2008/dec/12/heritage-architecture>

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/obituaries/article5326843.ece>

# Tributes

## From BuildingSMART members:

‘What an extraordinary man: strong leader with a passion for positive change, possessing gentle good humour with kindness and respect for all. We will miss our friend Nick for these things and more.’ – *Patrick MacLeamy, chair, BuildingSMART International*

‘Nick was an example to us all: calm, focused, unflappable and determined at home, work and with us in our ongoing quest for a better industry.’ – *Mark Bew, chair, BuildingSMART UK in succession to Nick Terry*

‘It is sad news... the kind of news that makes one take a step back and think about what is truly important. We will miss his presence and participation... collectively, we need more “good guys”.’ – *Tom Gay, chair, BuildingSMART Alliance, North America*

‘Nick made a tremendous contribution to the BuildingSMART cause and those who knew him knew him to be a thoroughly nice man.’ – *David Saffin, director, BuildingSMART UK*

‘Nick gave his characteristic spark to efforts to improve practice through BuildingSMART and was always supportive of the necessary technical work.’ – *Nick Nisbet, technical co-ordinator, BuildingSMART UK*

‘Nick set out and promoted the vision of integrated working supported by interoperable BIM.’ – *Jeffrey Wix, AEC3 UK*

‘[We] are totally bereft to learn that Nick is no longer with us ... the best among us are summoned too early.’ – *Alain Maury, founder member, BuildingSMART, French-speaking Chapter*

‘I am saddened deeply by this news. BuildingSMART will miss a great supporter and a man of great principle.’ – *John Mitchell, chair, BuildingSMART Australasia*

*Nick's legacy as a supporter of 'building smart' and as a leader of BDP architectural teams includes: (top) HQ for Roche Pharmaceuticals in Welwyn, which used IFCs; (bottom) Royal Albert Hall, London – a project characterised by teamwork and communication*



This tribute was produced by BuildingSMART UK.

Sources: BDP; eulogies by Paul Fowler and Peter Drummond at the funeral; *Times* and *Guardian* obituaries; Nick Terry, ‘All Together Now’, *RIBA Journal*, Sept 2007. Images courtesy of BDP.

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