

Arcadis champions Gen-Z voices in mobility with nationwide ADEPT fringe events

Prepared in collaboration with the team at ADEPT and the organisers of the annual Interchange Conference, Arcadis successfully facilitated a series of roundtable events across London, Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester, bringing together the next generation of mobility professionals. The roundtables, designed specifically for Gen-Z colleagues from across our industry to come together on the week of the 2025 ADEPT Autumn Conference, provided a unique platform for young professionals to connect, share ideas and shape the future of mobility. Arcadis Gen-Z facilitators led the sessions to encourage open dialogue, fresh thinking, and collaborative problem-solving on the issues that matter most to emerging talent.

Key features of the ADEPT fringe events:

- **Industry wide topics:** Digital and Data; Place; Energy; and Environment and Climate Resilience, aligned to the pillars of the 2026 Interchange Conference.
- **Four dynamic locations:** Events hosted in London, Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester, reflecting Arcadis's commitment to regional engagement and local impact.
- **Gen-Z focus:** Tailored for early-career professionals, creating space for their voices in conversations about the future of transport and mobility.
- **Networking and opportunity:** Participants connected with peers and industry leaders across the public and private sector, building valuable networks and exploring pathways for professional growth. The roundtable participants included peers from combined authorities, local authorities, Homes England, developers, colleges and universities, charities, consultants and other private sector organisations.

Challenges discussed

Transport infrastructure faces mounting challenges from climate and ecological emergencies, including sea level rise, extreme temperatures, high winds and habitat fragmentation. These threats cause flooding, infrastructure deterioration, and operational risks that require adaptive solutions. Nature-based interventions, such as dune restoration, tree planting, and green bridges, are preferred over traditional hard engineering due to their dual benefits for resilience and biodiversity. Innovative approaches were also discussed, from reflective road coatings and passive cooling through tree planting, to water-based rail cooling systems. However, these solutions must consider ongoing maintenance and seasonal impacts. Predictive maintenance and the integration of flexible design principles are essential to ensure transport networks remain reliable through extreme weather events.

Successful implementation of climate-resilient transport systems also relies on public engagement, political alignment, and economic viability. Overcoming climate scepticism and fostering public support requires effective communication and community engagement, and education around environmental goals and project benefits. Political differences and funding constraints can complicate decision-making and delay climate-aligned interventions, emphasising the need for robust economic cases. Equitable investment is vital to address transport inequalities, particularly in rural areas where transport quality and reliability is significantly behind urban centres. Looking forward, ambition should focus on encouraging long-term behaviour change towards sustainable travel, learning from international best practice, and building inclusive, resilient infrastructure that supports both people and nature.

Positive Feedback and Impact

Feedback to date has been overwhelmingly positive. Attendees have expressed their thanks for the opportunity to be involved, highlighting how rare and valuable it was to share their views on topics they are passionate about. The roundtables have not only sparked important conversations but have also fostered a sense of community and collaboration across the industry.

“These events are a testament to our belief that the best ideas come from diverse and engaged teams. By listening to Gen-Z, we’re helping to plan, design and build a transport system that works for everyone—now and in the future,” said Richard Hill, UK&I Local and Combined Authorities Account Director.

Looking Ahead

Given the positive impact and feedback from participants, Arcadis is excited to announce that they plan to continue the Gen-Z roundtables into 2026. In addition, Arcadis is leading a panel discussion at the Interchange Conference in Manchester (3-4 March), in partnership with ADEPT. **“Breaking the Gridlock: Gen Z's Role in Energising Sustainable, Digital Transport Futures”** takes place on Wed 4th March. We invite you to join us for this session to hear from young industry professionals. We remain committed to amplifying emerging voices and driving meaningful change in the mobility sector.