

Full-Day Conference: *Building FM Leaders for Tomorrow*

A full-day event guiding WFM's from challenge to actionable solution, combining discussions, live presentations, and practical demonstrations.

Delegates will:

- Explore systemic issues in FM leadership and people development
- Apply human-centric leadership frameworks
- Gain practical tools for capacity mapping, succession planning, and PDPs
- Understand how to make FM a career of choice at all levels from apprentices to senior leaders

Programme

Arrival & networking (09:00 – 09:30)

- Arrival coffee and pastries
 - Informal networking
 - Opportunity for delegates to meet speakers and peers
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Welcome (09:30 – 09:45)

- Welcome from **Mark Whittaker CIWFM – Former IWFM Chair**
 - Overview of the day and agenda
 - Thanks to delegates for attending
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Opening Keynote (09:45 – 10:30)

Presentation: *Leading Through Uncertain Times and Creating our FM Identity*

Delivered by **Toyin Aderiye and Dr Mel Bull**

This session explores the volatile nature of engaging with people and the workplace, as leaders and practitioners navigate through the fastest changes to work practices since the industrial revolution.

The presentation will examine:

- The World of Work in 2026: A Landscape in Motion
 - Working with Uncertainty – Leading into the Future
 - Reframing our FM identity in uncertain times
 - Leading through Change
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My journey (10:30 – 10:45)

Talk: *Richard Jenkins – Carlisle Support Services*

During this session Richard will talk about his leadership journey. The ups and downs, successes and challenges, that have contributed to his current success as MD of the Facilities Services division at Carlisle Support Services and the key skills that have made him successful as a leader in FM.

Morning break (10:45 – 11:15)

Coffee, pastries, and informal networking

Panel (11:15 – 11:50)

Discussion: "*Are we developing people — or just promoting the most exhausted?*"

A combined discussion exploring both systemic succession challenges in FM and whether leadership roles are structurally designed in ways that unintentionally drive burnout.

The panel will explore:

- The risk of technical competence without leadership development
- Whether leadership roles are structurally overloaded
- The commercial and operational risk of burnout-driven succession planning
- Trade-to-manager transitions and the invisible leadership load many new managers inherit
- How leadership capacity impacts retention, engagement, and long-term organisational stability

The discussion will include structured audience interaction and live reflection questions, helping delegates consider whether their organisations are unintentionally creating leadership strain.

Panel: Senior FM leader/IWFM People Development SIG Chair – Helen Kenyon CIWFM, Leadership Specialist – Claire Hurst, HR Specialist – Suzanne Hawkins, and Lived Experience/IWFM Midlands Region Chair - Sarah Orpwood CIWFM.

Interactive development (11:50 – 12:20)

Presentation: *The Leadership Communication Gap*

Delivered by **Claire Hurst**

Communication is often the difference between leadership success and leadership failure, yet many FM professionals move into management roles without ever being taught how to communicate as leaders.

This interactive session explores how misunderstandings develop, why messages are interpreted differently, and the impact communication has on trust, engagement, and team performance.

Through a practical audience exercise and real-world FM examples, delegates will discover simple techniques to improve clarity, reduce assumptions, and create cultures where people feel confident to ask questions and speak up.

Delegates will leave with practical communication tools they can apply immediately within their teams.

My journey (12:20 – 12:35)

Talk: *Victoria Potter – Kindred FM*

During this reflective session Victoria will review her own leadership journey, the challenges and insights that have contributed to her way of leading today. She will share the lessons she's learned and how she put them into practice to make her a leader in FM.

Speaker (12:35 – 13:10)

Presentation: *Leadership and Attracting Women into the C-Suite*

Delivered by **Valerie Miller**

This session explores the role leadership plays in building more diverse executive teams & developing future female leaders.

The presentation will cover:

- Attracting and developing women into senior leadership roles
 - The commercial benefits of more diverse boards and leadership teams
 - What organisations must do differently to create sustainable pathways into executive positions
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Lunch & reflection networking (13:10 – 14:00)

Buffet lunch

- **Structured reflection prompt:** delegates discuss:
 - Where is your organisation **promoting capability before capacity?**
 - What is one **leadership load issue** you recognise from the morning sessions?
 - Informal networking with speakers
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Speaker (14:00 – 14:35)

Presentation: *Talent Blindness: Leadership failure nobody talks about* (14:00 – 14:35)

Delivered by **Theresa Bell**

Winner of the 2025 IWFM Leader of the Year Award, Theresa Bell explores one of the most overlooked barriers to building future leaders: talent blindness.

Drawing on real-world experience, this session examines why high-potential individuals are often overlooked, how familiarity and bias can distort leadership judgement, and the organisational risks of failing to recognise emerging talent. Delegates will gain practical insights into identifying potential beyond performance, creating effective sponsorship cultures, and building stronger, more diverse leadership pipelines across FM.

Speaker (14:35 – 15:05)

Presentation: *FM as a Career of Choice: Building the Talent Pipeline* (14:35 – 15:05)

Delivered by **Sophie Donald**

This session explores how the profession can **better position Facilities Management as an attractive and viable career pathway**.

Topics include:

- Promoting FM to the next generation of talent
- The role of apprenticeships in strengthening the industry pipeline
- Developing structured entry routes into the profession
- How organisations can actively market and support FM career progression

The session connects directly to the wider theme of **building sustainable leadership pipelines across the sector**.

Afternoon break & leadership clinic (15:05 – 15:25)

- Refreshments and networking
 - Optional **leadership clinic**: delegates can speak informally to speakers about succession planning, career pathways, or human-centric leadership challenges
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Interactive development (15:25 – 16:40)

Presentation & Breakout: *Pathing that Works — From Capacity to Capability* (15:25 – 16:40)

Facilitator: **Dr Mel Bull**

- **Introduction**: overview of framework for developing future leaders across FM
- **Breakout groups (20 mins)**: delegates work in small groups on **four key areas** (succession planning, PDPs, gap analysis, capacity mapping) with all speakers facilitating
- **Summary (15 mins)**: share key findings and themes from groups with all delegates

Delegates leave with **practical frameworks, templates, and approaches** they can apply immediately.

Closing summation & optional networking (16:40 – 18:00)

- **Closing remarks** by **Andrew Hulbert FIWFM**, IWFM Chair
- Key takeaways from the day
- Optional networking and refreshments to finish