

Tamsin Omond (below left) is the granddaughter of a baronet, a candidate for the priesthood and a first-class honours graduate from Cambridge. And when it comes to sustainability, she represents the new breed of eco warrior preparing to oppose airport and nuclear development. The young founder of Climate Rush, which calls for the end of airport expansion scaled the House of Commons last February to oppose the third runway at Heathrow. Expect more exploits in 2009.



GLOOMWATCH PREDICTIONS

Building's panel of recession-watchers give their 2009 predictions and Grimdex figures for the year ahead

**Michael Ankers, chief executive, Construction Products Association
Grimdex: 8 (out of 10, 10 being the worst score)**

The industry is prepared for the worst and the first six months will be very difficult. There are some signs that things will begin to level off in the second half of the year, but there are many uncertainties that still have to be factored in.

**Steven Barker, RLF consultants
Grimdex: 5**

The first five months of 2009 complete our financial year 2008/09. Turnover is likely to be down £1.8m with profit £450k less than projected. Sadly, we have had to make 14 people redundant so far out of 180. Commercial projects are under pressure, residential has dried up but public sector commissions will continue to bolster our workload, provided the government does not run out of money – and there are already signs of delay in money coming through in some areas.

**Jaymie Carmack, trainee
Grimdex: 5.5**

I'm thinking of taking a year out because there are not many trainee jobs out there. I've got to put university options to one side because the job is more important. I'm worried, because when my contract runs out, will I be able to find another job? Now more jobs have gone, there's going to be a lot more competition for everything, even admin roles.



**Diane Johnson, director, electrical contractor, Northwich
Grimdex: 9**

Things aren't much better than they were, but they're not worse, either. We're just consolidating; we've picked up some

work, and we've not laid anyone else off since last month. We've lost tenders to non JIB companies who are only paying the minimum wage. We were paying £9 per hour, so wages are being driven down. None of the apprentices who have just finished with us have been given jobs. If we had the work, they'd still be working for us. If the work picks up we'll re-employ them.

**Markham Jones, 1st Choice property services
Grimdex: 8**

The phone still isn't ringing. It's pathetic. I do have two jobs on the horizon for 2009 but they're speculative and could fall through. But we live in hope. I don't think there is a person alive who isn't worried looking ahead to the new year.

Everyone is taking a step back and wondering if their jobs are safe. It's going to be tight and it's not going to get better soon.

**Mark Kennor, Pure Fit out
Grimdex: 3**

The prospects are looking good. We're seeing a decent level of enquiries and are working with some great clients. They are cash-rich and so they're taking the initiative and benefiting from their buying power. We're pleased to have the confidence gained from the successful completion of several projects over the past couple of months, which has given us good momentum going into 2009, with the intention to continually improve our service and product, allowing our plans for growth to be precipitated.

**Pascale Scheurer, Surface to Air Architects
Grimdex: 2**

Things are still looking okay, all our projects are still running and we haven't had to do any revision of designs. We're cautiously optimistic about 2009. We have work in the public sector, like in education which is a growth market. The private sector work is going fine, too, but most practices like us are focusing on public sector work.

PROJECTS OF THE YEAR

In the first quarter of the new year the government will rule on whether or not Ian Simpson's long-delayed tower at 1 Blackfriars gets the green light.

Land Securities' £2bn redevelopment of the Victoria station interchange, with buildings by Kohn Pedersen Fox, Benson & Forsyth and Patrick Lynch, goes in for planning.

Rafael Viñoly's controversial designs for the redevelopment of Battersea Power Station (below right) are due in for outline planning in March. English Heritage rolls up its sleeves ...

Detailed designs for Chelsea Barracks in west London are to be put in for planning by developer Candy & Candy in February. Sir Robert McAlpine and Bovis Lend Lease will find out which of them is likely to build it.

Contractors will be scrambling to get on board the first wave of work in the £7bn primary school programme, which is due to start in April.

Though projects look likely to dry up even further over the summer months, sometime after July work will start on Herzog & de Meuron's extension to Tate Modern – providing Sir Nicholas Serota can raise the extra funds in time. Mecanoo's designs for the £193m Birmingham Library are also due to be unveiled in the second half of the year.

