

Sustainability in the post-Carillion age

We are still in the throes of the Carillion collapse. Lives have been blighted, future plans scuppered and the role of private enterprise in public procurement is being called into question. Six months ago there were already sceptical voices questioning the sustainability of the Carillion balance sheet. Both Malcolm Howard and Peter Parry focused at an early stage on the role of the auditors. Martin White is working on a detailed analysis for the UKSA website, assessing what we can learn from the collapse.

The Carillion case illustrates that a company may be fundamentally unsustainable even if its accounts have been signed off. If the reputation of free-market economics is not to be permanently harmed, we need to aim for a broader definition of sustainability, exceeding the confines of environment policy alone. Elsewhere in this edition Professor Aled Jones of the Global Sustainability Institute at Anglia Ruskin University offers of glimpse of the scale of the challenge.

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