



HEFMA CONFERENCE 2026: AUDE SUMMER SCHOOL REFLECTIONS



AUDE Summer School 2026

*We went to learn...
but it became much more than the classroom.*

Ashleen Joorst

Manager: Capital Infrastructure Projects, University of the Western Cape

Lerato Maloka

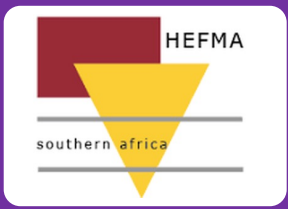
Manager: Facilities Maintenance, Sol Plaatje University

AUDE Summer School: University of Bristol, UK · 22–25 June 2026





OUR JOURNEY TODAY



1 What is the AUDE Summer School?

2 We arrived ready to learn

3 Inside the programme: 12 sessions

4 Our reflections: six themes

5 Where in the world? A quick quiz

6 Beyond the classroom

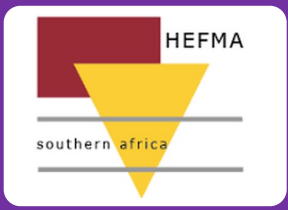
7 Connections that matter

8 Bringing it home





WHAT IS THE AUDE SUMMER SCHOOL?



AUDE

Together, for excellent university estates & facilities



A HEFMA partner

AUDE is one of HEFMA's three international alliance partners, alongside APPA and TEFMA.



A residential that nurtures emerging talent

Hear from current estates directors and sector experts on key topics in estates and FM.



A year-long commitment

The learning doesn't stop when the residential ends.



A network of peers

Working relationships that, for many, last well into the future.

Who is it for?

Aspiring senior leaders

Future directors of estates & FM

Rising from junior roles

Specialists broadening their reach



WE ARRIVED READY TO LEARN...



The obligatory flag photo

What we signed up for

Strategic thinking

Influencing & leadership

Stakeholder management

Effective communication

Real-life case studies

Building networks

Current thinking & practice

HE estates & FM specifics

Exposure to high-profile sector figures

Practical learning

Proactive learning

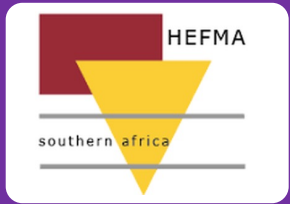
Team skills

New skills & methods to apply

The ground rules: no silly questions · respect opinions · participate · stay solutions-focused · patience · openness · network · be on time · and **HAVE FUN!**



INSIDE THE SUMMER SCHOOL: 12 SESSIONS



12 sessions

-

One Thread

-

Four big questions



3 sessions

How do we lead people?

- People & resilience
- Life as a director
- Holding the room
- Thought leadership



2 sessions

How do we manage risk?

- Practical compliance
- Shared institutional risk



4 sessions

How do we shape a better estate?

- Sustainability
- Smart campus
- Space management
- Masterplanning



2 sessions

How do we plan for an uncertain future?

- Tackling backlogs
- Operating under uncertainty

The thread: Estates and FM is now a strategic function (Plus a welcome from the AUDE Strategic FM Group).



OUR REFLECTIONS: SIX THEMES



Estates and FM is no longer a purely technical or operational discipline. It has become a strategic function.



**Leadership &
communication**



Risk & compliance



Sustainability



Digital transformation



Space & masterplanning



**Future-proofing under
uncertainty**



LEADERSHIP & COMMUNICATION: PEOPLE FIRST



“

Putting our people at the centre of everything we do.

“

True leadership is about supporting people through difficult times, not simply delegating responsibility.

From Technical Experts to Strategic Leaders:

Judgement, resilience, emotional intelligence and credibility now matter as much as technical expertise.



Bring clarity to complexity by using communication deliberately to build trust.

Leadership

Empathy

Trust

Accountability

Developing our teams

RISK & COMPLIANCE

Managing institutional risk together

Assurance that things are under control



Governance



Processes



Data



Consistency



Culture

Estates · Finance · Executive leadership: one team

Five pillars from the session Managing Institutional Risks Together

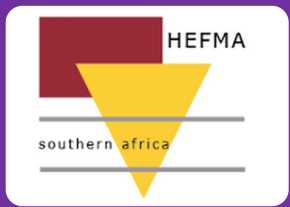
Compliance sits with leadership
not just with facilities teams.

Failures rarely come from one bad decision.
Usually it's a build-up: unclear governance,
untrusted data, inconsistent processes.

Build systems that catch and prioritise risk
continuously, not just annual certificates.



SUSTAINABILITY



“Systems first, fabric incrementally.”



A core business issue

Carbon projects now compete with other investments, so show both environmental impact and financial return.



Prioritise with evidence

Use metrics such as cost per tonne of carbon saved to get the most carbon reduction from limited funding.



Reduce demand

Better use of space, shared facilities and not occupying underused space are sustainability too.

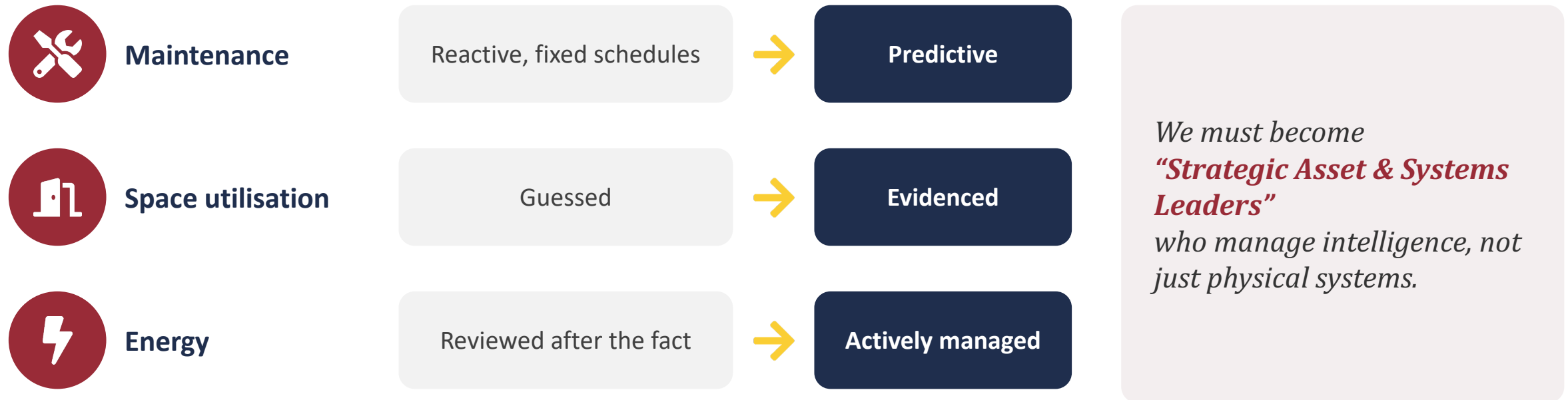


Vision for a sustainable approach (figure from our reflections)

Made with Napkin

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

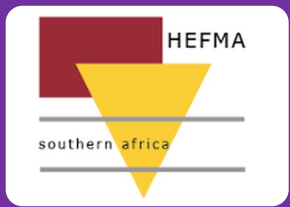
From static buildings to an “Intelligent Estate”



The real challenge is rarely the technology. It is fragmented data in systems never designed to talk to each other.



SPACE & MASTERPLANNING

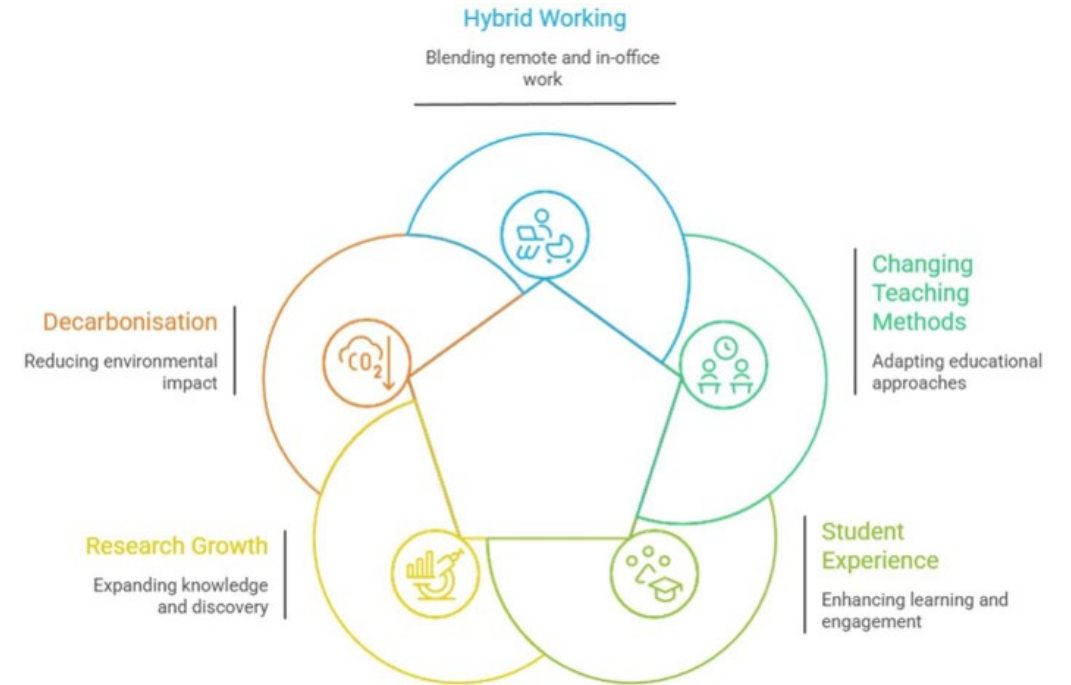


Space is no longer just a metric

m² per person tells you how much space exists, not whether it works.
Good space is judged by purpose, experience and outcomes.



Good space earns its place through what it enables, not simply what it costs to hold.



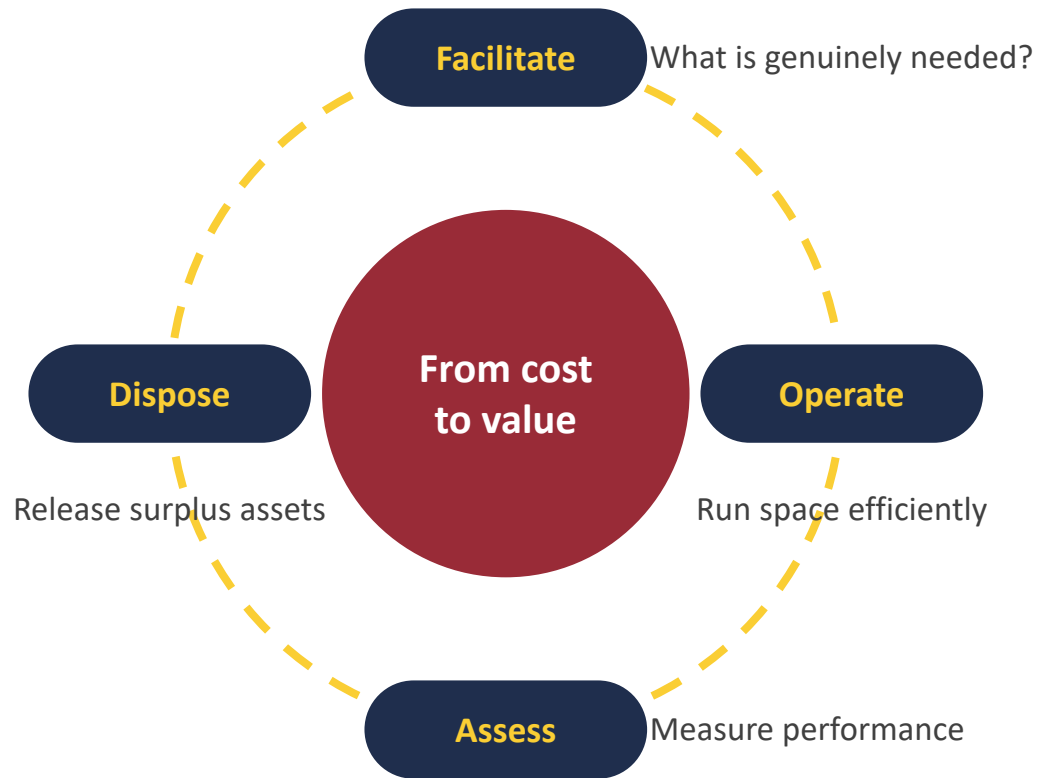
Made with Napkin

Integrated approach to sustainable estate management (figure from our reflections)

A building can have great worth to the institution but little market value.

FUTURE-PROOFING UNDER UNCERTAINTY

The corporate real estate cycle



“

Future-proofing is less about predicting the future and more about building resilience and adaptability into our decision-making today.

Backlog maintenance isn't only a funding issue. It's a leadership, governance and prioritisation challenge.

Future-ready campuses are not necessarily larger, but smarter, more flexible and more sustainable.



QUICK QUIZ: WHERE IN THE WORLD?



Where do you think these challenges came from?



Our CAFM system is ageing, and accurate compliance information is hard to get.



Backlog maintenance keeps growing while budgets stay tight.



Pay is less competitive than other sectors, so keeping good people takes real leadership.



We collect space utilisation data, but don't always use it to improve occupancy.



Over to you: UK, South Africa, USA or Australia? Call out your answers.



QUICK QUIZ: THE ANSWER



The answer: all of them.

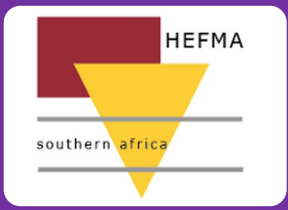
Different countries. Same challenges.

	UK	South Africa	USA	Australia
Ageing CAFM systems	✓	✓	✓	✓
Growing maintenance backlogs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Keeping good people	✓	✓	✓	✓
Using space data well	✓	✓	✓	✓

Raised by UK colleagues at the Summer School, lived by us in South Africa, and shared with our colleagues in the USA and Australia.



LEARNING DIDN'T STOP WHEN THE SESSIONS ENDED



Some of our best workshops came with a drinks menu



Debrief mode



Even the pub was an architecture lesson

Dinners · reflection · laughter · informal problem-solving



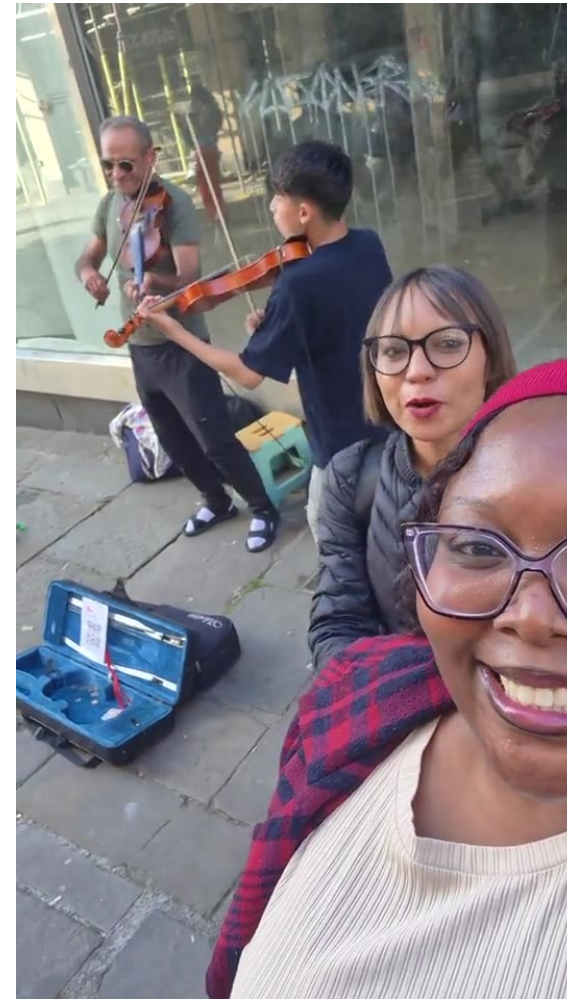
BRISTOL BEYOND THE CLASSROOM



Clifton Observatory



The harbourside



Click to play

*History,
architecture,
street music and a
lot of walking.*



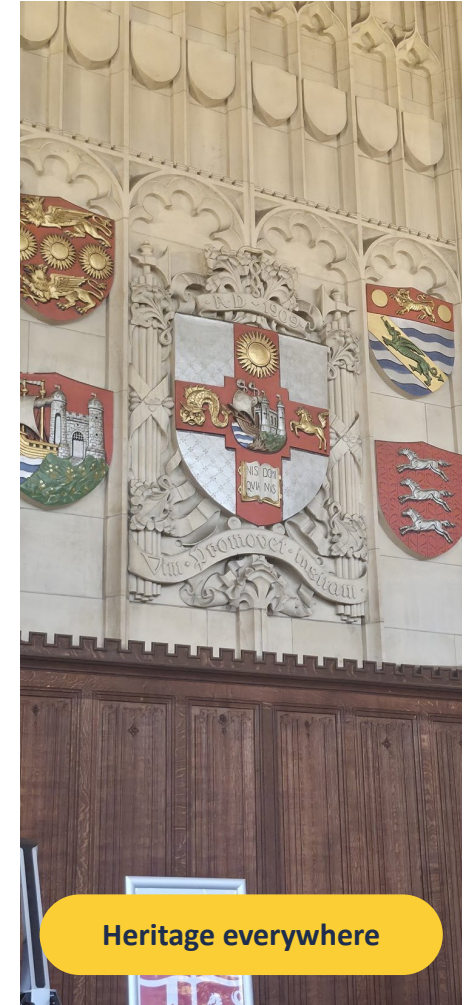
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL CAMPUS TOUR



The whole cohort on the campus tour



Trying the big chair

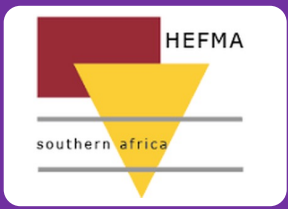


Heritage everywhere

Heritage buildings, modern expectations: a familiar FM balancing act.



CONNECTIONS THAT MATTER



*Colleagues when we arrived.
Friends for life when we left.*



Lifelong friends

Friendships that will outlast the programme



Colleagues

Peers who understand our challenges, and who we can call



A global network

Across institutions and countries, well beyond Bristol



Teachings we carry

A year-long programme: the learning continues at home



With the AUDE team



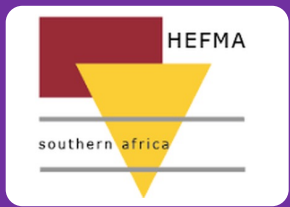
Partners in crime



I left feeling reassured by the strong sense of support and community within AUDE.



OUR KEY TAKEAWAYS



Estates leadership is emerging not as a support function, but as a strategic driver of institutional success.

- ✓ **Strong leadership matters.**
- ✓ **Reliable data matters.**
- ✓ **Governance matters.**
- ✓ **Learning from one another matters.**
- ✓ **People matter.**
- ✓ **Knowing your assets matters.**
- ✓ **Collaboration matters.**
- ✓ **Moving from reactive to proactive matters.**



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OUR OWN ESTATE?



Leadership

Be visible alongside our teams. Communicate deliberately. Lead with trust and accountability.



Planning

Move from reactive fixes to planned, programme-based investment, prioritised by risk.



Assets & data

Know what we have and how it performs. Connect our data so it informs capital planning.



Space & sustainability

Systems first, fabric incrementally. Use existing space better before building more.

Learn. Connect. Benchmark. Collaborate. Reflect. Improve.



THANK YOU HEFMA AND AUDE



A once-in-a-while opportunity and an invaluable experience.



**HEFMA - Higher
Education Facilities
Management
Southern Africa**

For selecting us and awarding the scholarship that made it possible:.

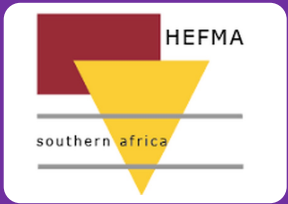


**AUDE - Association
of University
Directors of Estates**

For welcoming us as international delegates, and for a programme, speakers and hosts that taught us so much.

We learnt so much, and we're bringing it home: sharing it with our teams, our institutions and the HEFMA community.

THANK YOU



Learning + friendship + fun

“

The future success of HEIs will depend on their ability to adapt, collaborate and lead through uncertainty.

“

Technology, systems and processes are important enablers, but successful institutions ultimately depend on engaged teams, effective leadership and a culture of trust and accountability.

Ashleen Joorst & Lerato Maloka