

GRAHAM OLVER



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A principled, strategic and commercial leader with over 30 years' international business and project experience working with global players to turnaround, transform and grow ambitious businesses.

With a sharp legal mind forged through an early career as a barrister, Graham has achieved outstanding results by balancing clear analysis, strategic planning and focused implementation — often in challenging environments and business- not-as-usual situations.

Graham is a team player and leader. He builds and reshapes teams, projects and organisations and recognises the need to deliver both short-term results and long-term outcomes with an emphasis on people, collective purpose and building a collaborative organisational culture.

Working on pioneering projects in the infrastructure, international development and professional services space, he understands the nature and challenges of larger organisations and their supply chains.

He brings commercial experience, positive energy and creative thinking to design, problem solving and project delivery in complex political, commercial and contractual environments.

Graham has contributed to and been responsible for over 75 complex projects and programmes in over 50 countries, ranging from \$1 million to \$7 billion.

Leadership style

Equally at home working inside the organisation or representing it externally, Graham's leadership style is visible, creative and energetic. He is both challenging and compassionate, creating an inclusive culture focused on delivering clearly defined, shared goals.



“In every job I have done I see my role as making it possible, making it happen and making a difference.”

Growth

Graham has extensive hands-on experience bidding, negotiating, contracting and implementing three core components of growth: organic, joint ventures and mergers and acquisitions.

- As the GEC ALSTHOM investment director and consortium lead negotiator of a pioneering PPP project (Arlanda Express airport to Stockholm railway), Graham's experience and expertise delivered the first Swedish BOT and the first ever project-financed train operating company.
- At RWE Thames Water, Graham was responsible for key international expansion opportunities and was a member of the leadership team that acquired American Water to add to Thames Water's then presence in 44 countries with a full range of concessions, BOT, capital projects and specialist consulting services. During Graham's tenure, RWE Thames Water grew from 23 million to 72 million customers and was the third largest water company in the world.

Transformation

With considerable experience of PLC and major project turnarounds, Graham has the ability to stabilise, transform and grow businesses including special situations, insolvency and projects in distress.

He is able to quickly analyse a situation, develop a clear strategy, gain control and transform business performance to deliver change that improves short-term performance and delivers long-term sustainable outcomes.

- At Luton Rising, Graham immediately faced a deep crisis as the pandemic devastated air travel. He acted as the "guiding mind" to address municipality, airports, railway and business parks from a whole-system perspective and devised ways to keep them all solvent and focused on the future.
- Graham re-energised WYG Plc, a collapsed international business with debts of £130 million, transforming it into one of the fastest growing multi-disciplinary consultancies and increasing the share price by 150%.
- He led the construction, operating and finance negotiations to deliver the successful first BOT inward infrastructure investment deal in China, worth £700 million. This pioneering greenfield project was awarded PF Deal of the Year two years in succession.

CORE SKILLS

- Judgement and insight
- Forward thinking
- Coaching and leadership
- Capital raisings
- Project finance
- Asset portfolio management
- Major bids and proposals
- Situation analysis
- Complex problem solving
- Creative solutions
- Governance
- Performance management
- Negotiations
- Dispute resolution
- Corporate restructuring
- Organisation design
- Partnering and collaboration
- Cultural change
- Strategic brand positioning

SECTORS

- Energy
- Transport
- Water
- Healthcare
- Education
- International development
- Professional services

WORLDWIDE

- UK
- Europe
- Scandinavia
- Asia
- Russia
- North America
- South America
- Middle East
- Africa

Value

Graham's commercial and operational expertise enables him to lead and manage across the whole project lifecycle, balancing important detail with big-picture vision and delivering significant shareholder and investment returns.

- As Commercial & Operations Director at SKANSKA Infrastructure Development, Graham managed a portfolio which achieved a market valuation of SEK 8.5 billion.
- When RWE wished to disengage from the water market and its multi-utility strategy, Graham leveraged his strong project relationships to develop and procure a formal offer to acquire all of RWE Thames Water international assets through a joint venture to exit for \$1.5 billion.

Key roles

Chief Executive Officer – Cruise Terminals International 2024–2025

Cruise Terminals International (CTI) is a joint venture between iCON Infrastructure and Royal Caribbean Group to develop global strategic cruise port infrastructure. Graham is responsible for establishing CTI as a new destination development market player – building a unique platform of infrastructure and industry experts with deep global expertise.

Under his leadership, CTI has built a new industry platform with assets in operation and development in the USA, Caribbean and Europe.

Group CEO, Strategy & Senior Responsible Officer & LBC Corporate Director – London Luton Airport Limited 2019–2023

Graham took over as CEO just months before Covid decimated the aviation industry. He agreed an emergency stabilisation package and created an all-stakeholder recovery platform that led to the fastest recovering, and least disrupted UK airport.

The airport's application for expansion, via a Development Consent Order (DCO), was radically re-engineered, leading to a £1 billion cost saving. The Luton DART railway was brought to successful completion, and has now transported more than 5 million passengers. At Group level, Graham's leadership resulted in a £1 billion increase in airport asset and asset portfolio value.

Chief Operating Officer — WYG Plc 2009–2016

Graham joined the Board and acted as Group Services Director, Group Company Secretary. He promptly established a new actionable strategy, led on essential restructuring including organisational redesign and implemented new processes and operating frameworks.

He then relinquished these roles to concentrate fully on his role as Chief Operating Officer as the Group transitioned from insolvency, through turnaround and re-capitalisation, into growth.

Chairman and Non-Executive Director — British Expertise 2012–2017

As a multi-term Chairman and Non-Executive, Graham supported the new CEO to transition the company into a merger with the D Group, part of Strategy International. This eliminated the prospect of insolvency and created a strong industry voice, robust financial structure and an opportunity to engage more directly with Governments, NGOs and Major Industry Companies and investors.

Commercial and Operations Director — Skanska Infrastructure Development 2005–2008

Graham was a key member of the executive team, charged with commercial, programme and project management operations and asset management.

To build a cohesive business, he introduced highly effective governance processes with a strong emphasis on capability development including programme and project management. These actions delivered progressive investment returns from a mixed portfolio of projects in different stages of maturity.

Graham orchestrated bidding, operations, project life-cycle, risk management and strategic value realisation. In addition, he worked on strategic corporate options for Skanska to re-cycle capital through optimising the portfolio and selling individual assets.

Group Commercial Director — RWE Thames Water 2000–2004

Graham was responsible for the top 10 business and project opportunities, and building international capacity, with direct engagement for the most significant commercial and contract negotiations.

He created a commercially orientated culture including the development of a capability programme, merger and acquisition processes, modelling and pricing, due diligence and integration. As a member of RWE Group Development Team, Graham helped forge a solid platform for RWE's strategic international growth.

Legal and Contracts Director — GEC ALSTHOM 1990–2000

Graham progressed from a purely legal role to running an international legal department, becoming a major Projects and Divisional director and top 100 employee and was the go-to person to lead and close-out negotiations for UK and International BOT and project finance projects in power and rail.

He worked successfully to bridge relationships between divisions and joint venture partners in a new world of alternative and independent utility procurement, which eventually became known as Public Private Partnerships. Graham successfully orchestrated and negotiated lasting workable solutions in a space that had little precedent and developed new commercial, investment and operational practices.

Beyond work

Graham lives happily with his wife Louise, assorted dogs and children in Warwickshire. He is a passionate painter, a voracious reader and an unaccomplished blues guitar player. He loves supporting and encouraging his five children as they grow and develop their individual talents, team skills and walk their own path.



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