

Chairman's column

by Julie Fawcett

This is now the seventh year that we have run the National Student Awards. The regional judging has taken place, the awards events have been held and we now know who the ten bright young women are, who will go forward to the national Final in September.

Many WiP members are really supportive of the Awards process and I would like to thank them. However I am also struck that there are still those who don't perhaps appreciate what the Awards aim to achieve. As an organisation we are very much about supporting women at all stages in their development and this includes encouraging girls to 'think property and construction'. To me this makes perfect sense; the future of our industry relies on a pipeline of intelligent, inspiring young people who are passionate about what they do. Let's not miss some of them by failing to raise awareness to the many disciplines the industry offers.

Take this a step further and consider those undergraduates who are right on the edge of their careers. What they need is guidance, experience and exposure to the 'real world' and this is where the Awards are so valuable. These young women not only have to demonstrate their presentation skills; we also ask them to go outside their comfort zone through networking with senior people, at a very early age. We help them learn the skills that will reap dividends for them – and the industry – in their future careers.

So, if you've not got involved before, why not give it some thought. Can you offer a work placement to one of our finalists? Would



you like to take part in the organising, become a judge or host an awards event? Please help us catch these girls early. It is invaluable for them and, having heard from those people who have proactively supported the Awards, they have enjoyed the experience and their businesses have benefitted too.

Julie Fawcett
Chairman of Women in Property

National Student Awards Regional Finals 2013

Following the regional Awards, ten students will take part in the Best of Best final on 17th September.



National Student Awards Sponsor 2013



Turner & Townsend

Success stories

Congratulations to the following WiP members all of whom have been flying high in recent months:

Claire Beaumont



Claire Beaumont Congratulations to commercial property lawyer Claire Beaumont, who has been made partner at Laytons Solicitors, Manchester. Claire was branch Chairman in 2012 and a founder of the Manchester Property Forum.

Joanna Embling



Joanna Embling and Tracey Huntley Joanna Embling, property consultant and Tracey Huntley, on secondment from Grainger plc, have been recruited to the Government's Private Rented Sector Taskforce, a five strong team each with their own area of industry expertise appointed to build partnerships and stimulate investment into the sector.

Tracey Huntley



Ros Kerslake



Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of the Prince's Regeneration Trust, has been appointed to the board of Quintain Estates as an independent non-executive director.

Liz Russell



Liz Russell has been promoted to Senior Business Development Manager at Nabarro with responsibility for the firm's key client management programme.

Monique Morgan



Congratulations to Monique Morgan of GVA, who has been appointed to the Midlands Regional Board of the RICS.

Getting Into Mentoring

WiP's mentoring programme is highly respected and, over the eight years it has been running, hundreds of members have realised its benefits but for some, mentoring is a bit of a grey area.



Sandi Rhys Jones, leads the WiP programme, "Both parties need to be aware of the ground rules and responsibilities, right from the start," she said. "Mentoring is not only about passing on knowledge and skills, but is also about acting as a sounding board. However supportive your friends or partner may be when you talk about work issues, a mentor can offer an objective and informed view that helps you to identify a way forward."

What is a mentor?

"A mentor helps someone become what they aspire to be, and helps them to realise their potential. The Women in Property mentoring scheme is based on role model mentoring, and we put great emphasis on identifying role models who are human and inspirational, rather than intimidating! Mentors are guides, not teachers – and they are not infallible."

And the mentee?

"A key element of effective mentoring, which often surprises people, is that the mentee drives the relationship. A mentoring meeting is not an opportunity for a non-specific cosy chat, but should be a structured discussion on a topic or issue that the mentee has identified. She must be ready to challenge but be clear about her expectations."

A successful mentoring relationship helps a mentee to improve self-esteem and confidence, broaden horizons and raise career expectations. And it is not a one-way process. In addition to hearing perspectives,

a mentor can benefit from refreshing and validating her own experience."

How does one find a mentor, or mentee?

"In the WiP programme, people apply through the website and are then offered a place on a regional mentoring training session. Appropriate matching is essential and I work with Fiona Alfred and the regional administrator to identify compatibility based on someone's discipline, sector, location and experience. The feedback form completed by each participant after the training provides us with more indicators. We do the match-making and propose 'couples'. This can sometimes take a little time, but it is important to get it right."

What are the ground rules?

"There are some simple ones, such as agreeing how often to meet, when and where. It is also important to identify expectations and possible outcomes. Setting boundaries on personal issues is

Careers DVD

WiP prides itself on our Careers programme, which starts with help, advice and guidance for school age students, runs through graduate and post-graduate support and continues throughout the professional careers of our members.

Experience has taught us that, for the majority of school students (and particularly girls), there is very little information available or understanding of, the wealth of career opportunities available in the property and construction industry.

Midlands Chairman, Elizabeth Flowith came up with the idea of developing a Careers DVD, to support our existing outreach programme. The DVD will feature WiP members representing ten different property and construction disciplines, each talking about their role. The intention is that

it will be used by our members when they visit schools. For the schools that we are unable to visit personally but which would value careers advice, we propose sending them a DVD or a web link to the 'film', which a member of the teaching staff could use as a teaching tool.

The branches are contributing towards the DVD and we are in the process of seeking further sponsorship. If you think you may be able to help, please contact Fiona Alfred, executive director, on 07836 233253.



another important rule. But a key point to make is that mentoring is a relationship between two human beings, and however hard we try to identify a good match, sometimes a relationship simply doesn't work out. So an essential ground rule is to agree a 'no fault' divorce clause."

How does the process evolve?

"In phases. You build rapport, set direction and then progress through identifying issues and actions. There is no set timetable for a mentoring relationship, but they generally last for around a year, and often people stay in touch after that on an ad hoc basis. Rapport is based on focusing on the individual, having empathy and respect for each other's opinions and sharing mutual goals. But overall, trust is key."

Midlands members Emma Evans of Alliance Planning and Naomi Fisher of APEC Architects both attended a mentoring training session in

Birmingham and have since been matched with each other, Naomi mentoring Emma.

Emma has in turn, been matched and is now a mentor. She said, "I have found the mentoring role extremely rewarding and am looking forward to helping my mentee progress with her future career."

Naomi said, "I had always thought of mentoring as a fairly ad hoc process. However the workshop really opened my eyes to the potential of the mentoring relationship, the benefits of not using in-house mentors and setting down a framework of rules. It really got me thinking about what I want out of my career long term, as well as what I could potentially offer a mentee, from my experience."

Women's Career Choices: Take off, Tick over or Exit



In June, the Women's Business Council (WBC) published its report 'Maximising women's contribution to future economic growth'. As the report indicates, women at the middle stage in their working lives "are looking to capitalise on the progress they have made, either by securing their positions or by looking to move into more senior and managerial roles. It is also a time when most - though not all - women will have children, or be thinking of doing so."

The report cites three issues that are critical at this stage; how business supports women by managing talent, the cost and availability of childcare and access to flexible working.

All these points have been discussed at our events over the years and, in particular by our panel at the Top 100 Women's Power debate with Property Week magazine in 2012. We have formed a small Task Force with the aim of seeking practical ways to stem the loss of skill and to increase the pipeline of talent amongst women working in the construction, engineering and property sectors. This Task Force will focus on three areas: the mid-career individual; the corporate environment; fiscal influence.

Read the WBC report in full at <http://womensbusinesscouncil.dcms.gov.uk/the-full-report/>

Branch News

Central Scotland

Members and guests enjoyed a day at the races, when they attended the **2013 Stobo Castle Ladies Day** at Musselburgh Racecourse. The group had the benefit of an exclusive bar and betting facilities and prizes were awarded for 'Most Stylish' and 'Best Hat'.

Midlands

New Street Station is a landmark in Birmingham, and the New Street development will transform the station. Carol Stitchman, Head of Design, updated us on the latest developments in the project as it reached its half way point, when the concourse and existing entrances closed and three new entrances opened, into the first phase of the new station.



Northern Scotland

Members and guests braved a cold, dark evening to negotiate a muddy path through Bancon Developments' construction site at Craigton Road, Aberdeen to inspect **Northcote Lodge**, a new residential care home for the elderly which is to replace the Victorian granite Nazareth House.



North West

The North West branch held its popular black tie **Annual Dinner** at Manchester's Midland Hotel. Nearly 200 guests were treated to an insightful glimpse into

the world of rugby by respected Sky Sports presenter, Angela Powers and entertained by compere cum planning consultant Linda Wright. The event, kindly sponsored by Property Search Group, raised a record amount for local children's charity, Childflight.



South East

Heather Townsend, co-author of the book **"How to make Partner and still have a life"** talked candidly about the stresses of juggling a family and career in an honest and humorous manner, with the audience sharing stories of their own. This brought about a very open discussion on a topic which is felt by many to be "off limits" in the workplace.



South Wales

Stoford Developments invited WiP to attend the 'topping out' of its prestigious headquarter building for Admiral Group, which is being constructed by



Sir Robert McAlpine. This was followed by the presentation of the 2013 National Student Awards South Wales award at a drinks reception in the nearby Park Inn Hotel.

South West

George Ferguson, Mayor of Bristol and past President of the RIBA, was the guest speaker at the South West branch Summer Drinks Party, kindly sponsored by GroundSure. The event was held at the Royal West of England Academy and guests were able to enjoy its 'Monumental' exhibition by sculptor Sophie Ryder.



Yorkshire & North East

Last year the Yorkshire & North East Branch conducted a study into membership and recognised the strong need for greater engagement between members. The Members' Forum was devised, where members host a short presentation on an industry or business development related topic, leading into group discussion. The Members' Forum seeks to offer members the opportunity to meet regularly to discuss and debate current issues within property, raise profiles, offer support to each other and share knowledge. Sponsorship for the whole upcoming "Six Degrees of Separation" series has been sponsored by Aedas Architects, Carbon Saver, Harris Construction Management, Indigo Planning Ltd, The Partners Group and Spawforths. This event remains a benefit strictly for members.