

Chairman's column

by Brenda Jones

The revelations about Harvey Weinstein's sordid behaviour have put sexual harassment firmly in the public domain. They also show how difficult it is for people to speak out about misconduct at work.

Intake of women and other under-represented groups is improving in our industry. Employers want a diverse workforce and therefore want to create a climate where everyone feels valued. However, there is still a diversity deficit at senior levels. Our industry needs to be proactive if it is to redress this imbalance.

We need to bring about a culture change in our industry where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. This means actively challenging unacceptable behaviour, whether it is sexual harassment, bullying, patronising behaviour or unconscious bias. This will benefit everyone in our industry and help to improve our outputs.

Our Association has a key role to play in

breaking down barriers and overcoming preconceptions. We run over 350 events a year, helping women to increase their knowledge and skills as well as build strong personal networks. Our mentoring programme provides one to one support to achieve personal goals. Our student awards programme gives young women a foot on the career ladder and helps employers to attract talented female students. We help senior women improve their visibility by finding them opportunities to speak at industry events.

All of this relies on our members volunteering their time. If you'd like to get involved, please do get in touch chairman@womeninproperty.org.uk



Brenda Jones
Chairman of Women in Property

Be honest with yourself, be authentic with others

by Jo Williams, incoming National Chairman 2018



"Having worked in the construction and property industry since 1995 and been a member of the Association since 2008, I'm honoured and excited to be appointed National Chairman and very much looking forward to helping to give women a voice in our industry.

By profession, I am a Chartered Building Surveyor and Partner at Sanderson Weatherall LLP. I believe I am representative of many women in the industry, in that I've never really sought out promotion. Success has come through maximising personal development and opportunity.

Every day holds a learning opportunity and I've actively reflected on each lesson. Both positive and negative experiences are all part of what makes us who we are. Women have great, untapped potential to bring to so many aspects of our industry and I want to encourage each woman to do just that. I urge you to explore the WiP Mentoring Scheme, whether as mentee or mentor. As a mentor I found the process to be really rewarding. Similarly, you can 'give back' in other ways; for example I am an RICS APC Assessor and also

an external examiner for the University of Greenwich.

On reflection, I think that what works for me is being honest with myself and authentic among others. In the popular press, 'authenticity' is limited to discussions about high performance, or leadership-styles. I believe that everyone has some level of leadership requirement at all levels of their careers, and being authentic is the key that links these stages of development. Women (and men too) often try to be someone else; try to be what they think the industry wants of them; try to put their own needs second in order to succeed. This mind set needs to change and we need to be honest with ourselves and our colleagues. We need to be good at being who we are!"

2017 Branch Chairman Highlights

Our current branch Chairmen only have two more months left in the role. A big thank you to all of them for their hard work and commitment. A committee officer role, particularly that of Chairman, gives members a good grounding for future management or the boardroom, with strategic planning, financial forecasting, event organisation and delegation skills, all key to the position. Here are their personal 2017 highlights.

Emma Carmichael-Stewart,

Central Scotland, said "My personal highlight from 2017 has been getting a record number of Student Awards nominations we have ever had in the Central Scotland branch which resulted in us having two separate judging days and two regional winners. We are hoping to carry that momentum into the 2018 Awards."



"We were delighted to run an exclusive event with Rob Groves of Argent who gave us an update on their Paradise scheme which is making an impressive impact on Birmingham city centre," said **Charlotte Bloomfield, Midlands.** "This was a true member benefit as Argent weren't going to be doing any more events until 2018. I'm also very pleased to welcome Sophie Brown of Redrow Homes to the committee."



Laura Dunlop, North West, is also pleased to welcome new committee members, who will be instrumental in the continued growth of the branch, which spans the Manchester and Liverpool conurbations. "We're also really happy with the growing support we're getting at our events from the industry in the North West - we've been taking bookings for our annual dinner in



L>R: Sandra Burke, Kal Gill-Faci, Emma Tynan

April, since November last year, so I'm sure that will be a highlight for 2018."

Marcia Gillings, South East said, "My personal highlight was the launch of the Cambridge satellite. This is giving WiP geographical reach and spreading our influence in one of the most important commercial centres of the south east. Well done to Katy Klingopulos of Bircham Dyson Bell LLP for so successfully taking on this initiative."



Nicola Jones, South Wales, was thrilled with the success of the first branch Student Awards dinner, when the South Wales winner was announced. "We had wonderful feedback from our supporters. They particularly enjoyed a series of video blogs we invited the Students to do, which were shown on a large screen and really brought the Awards to life."



The South West branch continues to grow from strength to strength. **Rachel Bell, South West,** said "I have been very proud to 'stand tall' in raising our profile this year. We have such supportive committees across the region who have all worked in joining WiP SW with other associations, to run events like CIBSE, FBE, BCO etc. The one highlight was our 'Around the World' evening with BPAA."



"Having our events oversubscribed has been fantastic, said **Louise Francis, Thames Valley.** "Diversity on the committee has enhanced our reach and we're having so many people asking about membership, which is great."



Hannah Richardson, Yorkshire & North East has been very encouraged by the Member Only Breakfast Forums, hosted by a different member, on a different topic, on a bi-monthly basis, throughout 2017. "These have proved very popular with Members. It's a great regular forum to get to know other Members and valuable professional development. We have sought feedback on the 2017 forums and it has all been positive, so we look forward to picking these up again in 2018."

Building a better workforce

Rachel Bell, Chairman, WiP South West

WiP South West wanted to find out more about what women want from work, although this isn't about women per se, because many of the issues impact both women and men. Joining forces with Gapsquare, a leading provider of pay gap analysis and executive research consultants, Rosemont Partnership, we undertook a piece

- Only 12% of women are in a managerial role and, perhaps unsurprisingly, 74% said they don't have a mentor.
- 80% of respondents said their role is traditional full or part time, a particular problem around the family years.
- Only 16% said their role was flexible,

of talented female staff should explore their own policies, including training, promotion and access to mentoring. They need to address work-life balance – employers ignore flexible working at their peril! The industry as a whole must look at how it inspires and attracts new talent – and this starts in school - selling it as a vibrant, diverse and fulfilling arena to work in. Women themselves must make sure they're visible, both within their own work structures and to the next generation – role models are critical.



of research among representatives from all sections of the property and construction market, asking questions on three core areas – Education, Skills and Training; Recruitment; and Retention and Benefits. In brief:-

- Over 30% of those questioned leave their jobs after two years or less, a real drain on talent.

yet flexible working was cited as being the overwhelming benefit of choice, if only it were available

These results probably feel familiar because they endorse what most of us already know...but what do we do about it? Those employers experiencing this haemorrhage

It is really important to note that there are plenty of good things happening too. We have had great feedback from companies in the South West who are actively introducing flexible working practices that are helping boost retention and productivity and we know there are some fabulous role models out there. Collectively, they must be the industry's inspiration. Click here to see the research.

Into the future – inspiring the next generation

Anecdotally, we know that the majority of school children have little knowledge of possible jobs in property and construction. Many simply don't come across adults working in the sector, and more often than not, it isn't on the careers service radar. Hardly surprising then that we work in an industry that struggles with diversity, if it is not reaching girls and boys from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds.

WiP has been involved with education initiatives for many years, relying on the passion of our volunteers who go into schools, attend careers fairs and help run the National Student Awards.

For example, for the past six years, the South-East branch has organised a fantastic introduction for year 8 students (age 12-13) to the work of the property industry and the built environment, at the Ladies Bridge – Waterloo Bridge – construction of which was undertaken by a work force made up predominantly of women during WWII. Working with Lilian Baylis Technology School, Lambeth, some 120 students, together with

volunteers from a rounded group of property professionals, visit the bridge looking out for decks, piers, expansion joints and stress points. Not only do they get an insight into how a bridge is constructed, the visit also highlights the many opportunities that the built environment has to offer be it architecture, planning, chartered surveying, engineering, project management or, of course, the many other disciplines that are needed to build a city.



The North West branch took a stand at the Manchester School of Architecture End of Year Show Job Fair, meeting with BArch and MArch students, Sophia Fleming of Sophia Fleming Consulting, Chithra Marsh and Rosie Nimmo of Saunders Partnership met with lots of enthusiastic students keen to

hear more about Women in Property, our members and membership benefits.

Individual members also take time out to make personal visits to schools. Mandy St John Davey, former South Wales Chairman, visited Ninian Park Primary school as part of the Open Your Eyes week, created by Cardiff Council.

"It was a privilege to go into the classroom at grass roots level and talk about what I do and what I've achieved. Not everyone is academic, it was important for me to explain just how vital skilled workers such as builders, bricklayers, plumbers and electricians are to the future of Wales. Also I wanted to emphasize the importance of engineers, surveyors and architects. Likewise with girls, I wanted them to think about all possibilities."



If you would like to get involved on the WiP Education Programme, please contact your branch.

Branch News

Northern Scotland members and guests were in the very privileged position of being some of the first to tour the Marischal Square Development. Muse Developments and Aberdeen City Council who worked in partnership on the project delivered a short background presentation and tour of the site which includes office space, parking, hotel, cafes, restaurants and civic space.



The **North West** branch held a "Chasing dreams...not dragons - Walking Tour of West Didsbury Village", conducted by WIP Member Katherine Ludlam of Ludlam Associates. Kath explained the history of how the impressive artwork which can be found on the side elevations of various properties around West Didsbury, came to be. The walk between sites presented a great opportunity to catch up with existing contacts and befriend others, from a wide range of property specialisms.



The newest **South East** satellite, in Cambridge, held their first site tour, visiting Cambridge Assessment's new building "The Triangle", which was due to complete at the end of 2017. Rob Smart, Head of Group Construction at Cambridge Assessment,



kindly showed a group of members and their guests around the site explaining the thought processes of the build and all the interesting design features. The office space will be able to accommodate up to 3,000 employees by 2025.

The **South Wales** branch, with Wardell Armstrong, held a sell-out 'Speedy Networker' event at Chapel 1837. Colleagues from across the built environment and construction sectors attended the speed-dating style event, with three minutes to get to know each partner, before moving along for their next 'networking date'.



The **South West** branch held an 'Around the World' Autumn Drinks Party in October, when they joined forces with the Bristol Property Agents Association (BPAA). Guests were offered an evening of international indulgence and networking whilst allowing the guests to have the opportunity of 'travelling around the world' at the Bristol Harbour Hotel.



Nearly 200 Yorkshire property professionals supported the WIP **Yorkshire & North East** Christmas cocktails party at Harvey Nichols. Sponsored by Linden Homes and Kings Chambers the annual event is a landmark in the Yorkshire property networking calendar.



Success Stories

As ever, WiP members are moving onwards and upwards. Congratulations!



Tracey Hartley has joined Howard de Walden Management Ltd as Director of Residential



Harriet Holmes has joined Wilberforce Chambers as a Barrister



Hannah Richardson of Spawforths has been appointed Branch Chairman, Yorkshire & North East, until March 2019



Megan Taylor has been promoted to Director at Lambert Smith Hampton, Cambridge



Rebecca Tregarthen has moved to Smith & Williamson in Bristol as Senior Business Development Manager



Joanne Wicks of Wilberforce Chambers has been appointed Chair of the Property Bar Association

Forthcoming Events:

Top Ten Tips - How To Survive MIPIM 2018
Tuesday 6th February, 6.30pm at Aon, The Leadenhall Building, London

Breakfast at MIPIM, Cannes, hosted by Wilberforce Chambers: Tuesday 13th March, 9 - 11am



REPS Charity Golf Day
Thursday 3rd May, Chigwell Golf Club, Essex



Property Race Day, Ascot, Friday 13th July 2018