

## Chairman's column

by Monica Green, National Chairman

Thank you to all who completed our recent membership and diversity survey. This is what you told us: the majority of you joined Women in Property to network and, indeed, providing a professional network is still deemed to be our most important activity, closely followed by raising the profile of women in the industry.

This last point, specifically profiling black and brown role models is felt to be key, as is visibility on speaker platforms. You offered some helpful suggestions, many of which we were already working on, others we will discuss with our branch committees but 'headlines' include collaborating with other professional industry groups to promote diversity and, related to this, participating in high quality research papers to reinforce our position as important influencers. You are keen that we should encourage our male colleagues at all levels to participate in the conversation and that we should support schools and career changers to explore the roles available in the industry.

As for running events, you are very

appreciative of the many and varied webinars and informal catch-ups offered by the branches. Many of you have found that the virtual platform has provided the opportunity to attend events which ordinarily you couldn't reach, either because of location or timeframe and, in meeting online, you have connected with members across the country. So, while nothing replaces the personal interaction and bonding of 'physical' events, our virtual programme will continue indefinitely and we look forward to 'rule of six' networking and socially distanced network walking, as and when Government guidance allows.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Women in Property and each other.



Monica Green,  
National Chairman of Women in Property



## Virtually undaunted

Buoyed by the success of the regionally virtual Student Awards, our next challenge was to organise the National Final Judging Panel, again using our Zoom platform.

All credit to the thirteen national finalists who, after a successful morning's online Mentoring Training, each faced the judges from their own homes across England, Scotland and Wales (and one from Singapore). Meanwhile the judging panel - our two national Awards sponsors, represented by Carole Ditty of Bouygues UK and Iain Maxwell from Savills, accompanied Awards Facilitator Iain Holliday, at Savills in London, while National Chairman Monica Green joined from York.

Thanks to all involved and congratulations to all the students, who performed admirably. The 2020 winner will be announced in November.

# Are your foundations built for Gen Z?

Fiona Dearing, Senior Lecturer, Manchester Metropolitan University



As more Boomers enter retirement, Gen Z will be replacing them, bringing with them an entirely different worldview and perspective on their careers and success in the workplace.

Generation Z, individuals born after 1996, raised in the shadow of the largest economic downturn since the Great Depression, by either Generation X or Millennial (Y) parents who passed along their street-smart sense of self-reliance, Gen Z has become a very pragmatic, entrepreneurial generation.

They are arguably the most connected generation yet, the true digital natives spending ten hours a day online, 70% watching YouTube videos for at least 2 hours every day. They are used to 'virtually' everything being at their fingertips, in the form of their smartphones, music, pictures, videos, taxis, you name it! However, they long for social contact that's not through a screen and, they're big on social sustainability and community-focused developments.

Understanding the forces that shape their views, career aspirations and unique styles is essential for companies looking to attract them. If you hire Gen Z candidates, you may find them working unusual hours, but always efficiently using their time. Time is very precious to this diverse generation.

As students, they have learnt the latest technologies in their profession, when coupled with their natural ethical and sustainability desire, they embrace new ways of working. Gen Z soak up new technologies, they're big on security and they are keen advocates on human rights, valuing authenticity in leadership. They have a drive for a sustainable future, where technology and sustainability go hand in hand. However, they think much more can be done to address society's challenges and they want to be a part of this positive impact.

Gen Z can bring new ways of thinking about the built environment, homes for life and lifestyles with their desire to be connected. Heightened by the unprecedented changes in the environment, they are quick to adapt and they're very resilient. Eager to work, choosing dependable employers who can offer stability and, as they are used to immediacy, they can obtain information quickly. The question is are your foundations built to support their inimitable, unique capabilities?



## It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.

Sandi Rhys Jones OBE,  
Public Affairs and Mentoring Lead,  
Women in Property

The past few months have severely tested every aspect of our lives, giving an entirely new dimension to debates around work/life balance and throwing into acute relief the challenges of sustaining businesses, jobs, relationships, health and wellbeing. As someone who remembers the three-day week (power cuts, shortages of everything, rubbish in the streets, the dead unburied) and three recessions (financial crash, negative equity, people losing life savings as well as jobs) I am not a stranger to tough times, but Covid tops them all. So what to do? Women in Property being the active and fearless organisation it is, it didn't take long to come up with some ideas – and more importantly – to share them in the right places.

One of the first responses was triggered by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in Work calling for submissions on the impact of furlough, so we leapt at the chance to respond with a case study. We revealed how employers can generate both negative and positive impacts in uncertain times. A chartered surveyor member described how she felt in limbo on furlough but occupied her time with self-funded arbitrator training and coaching three furloughed graduates for their APC (they were all successful). When the graduates were taken back to the office, she was still out on a limb and worried she would end up redundant. So she took action independently, putting the word out in the business and was immediately headhunted by a new team.

In contrast, an architect member reported how she took voluntary furlough, was supported by the firm to take Passivhaus training, had regular upbeat contact and valued the commitment of the partners to keep the business going. The Women in Property case study concluded with a policy steer that Government should recognise companies that support staff in developing skills whilst on furlough by making the next round of financial support dependent on providing evidence of such activity.

The furlough case study generated other opportunities to promote Women in Property, appearing as an article in Property Week, being cited in a keynote speech Sandi Rhys Jones gave to the online Kent Construction Expo on 1 October and also mentioned in online chat at the launch of the influential Chatham House strategic plan 'The Covid-19 Gender Gap: How Women's Experience and Expertise Will Drive Economic Recovery'. More on this later.

# Well-placed

Gaining in-situ work experience is an invaluable stepping stone for the early career, so thank you to all those employers who are supporting the next generation of built environment professionals, particularly this year when the odds have been stacked against 'normal' activity. Here are the stories of four of our Awards finalists.



**Alice Fox**  
Midlands winner 2018

During my first year at Loughborough University I attended a talk by Chris Butler, MD of Walter Lilly, a construction firm specialising in high-end residential. I was fascinated by the idea of working in central London on homes of such high quality requiring a real attention to detail. I applied and was offered the role of Trainee Design Manager. I spent 13 months living in London and commuting to site just off Oxford Street. I was given incredible opportunities, from managing my own packages to working directly with the client. Working on site had its challenges. I was one of very few women which initially felt intimidating but I quickly found my feet and learnt to embrace the environment. My year in London showed me how enjoyable working in construction can be and the breadth of opportunities available.



**Emily Hacking**  
South West co-winner 2019

I had the privilege of completing another summer placement on the Thames Tideway project, based at

Chambers Wharf, the main drive site for the East section of the works. The major milestones that I was able to witness during my time were the delivery of the 890Te Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) "Selina" to site by barge and lowering it into the pit bottom of the shaft. Being more involved with temporary works, this placement has given me a better insight into design and possible solutions to problems posed on site. I have gained valuable experience in producing the paperwork necessary to ensure the safe construction of elements that are needed for the launch of a TBM. I am very grateful for the opportunity and I hope to be back on site soon to visit and see the progress made.



**Eunice Ebuk John**  
National winner and Yorkshire & North East co-winner 2019

My 15-month placement with Smalley Marsey Rispin Architects (SMR), for my 3rd year, Architectural Technology, has been a real leap into the working world. I joined the Logistics feasibility team and have been busy serving one of SMR's key clients, creating and progressing concept designs for both UK and international schemes for varying logistic uses. Although I believed I knew a lot about building regs and BIM, my colleagues introduced me to a wealth of knowledge and the benefit of their years of experience. My confidence and competence have grown so much. Under the supervision of my team leader I ran jobs, seeing them

through to both planning and tender and learning how to work collaboratively with other disciplines and clients, in regular meetings and conference calls. Understanding the complexities, resilience and requirement for detailed attention has been a much smoother journey for me, thanks to the support of my family at SMR.



**Weronica Pawlowska**  
Yorkshire & North East co-winner 2019

This summer, I completed an internship with Bouygues Construction, working for the main contractor as a Site Engineer. I was exposed to various tasks which had differing levels of difficulty and range of skills required. I've learnt how to manage and plan the works on site for subcontractors working in parallel. By doing so, I needed to practise my communication, management, people and planning skills. Daily on-site management was the biggest learning point for me, solving problems speedily in a dynamic and pressured work environment. While leading the weekly progress meetings, I've learnt the importance of clear communication and backing up verbal communication via drawings and minutes. Lastly, I've experienced project management from the admin side, for example validating pieces of evidence and preparing transparent reports. I am grateful to the team for the experience and the range of responsibilities."

# Branch News



## Lancashire & Cumbria

From Stornoway down to London,

members got together to have some virtual networking fun on a sunny summer Thursday evening with The Lakes Distillery. With gin samples and Lakes branded gin glass issued in advance, Millie Forster took everyone through some of the speciality gins from the award-winning distillery, including a lesson on how to make their delectable cocktail 'Blue Bird'.



The Northern Scotland branch is pleased to be involved

again this year in the Build-It Aberdeen Construction and Property Conference. The theme this year is The Role of Technology and Digitalisation in Securing a Sustainable Future for Construction and the virtual conference - 17-20 November - will bring together industry professionals to share knowledge, case studies and lessons learned for the benefit of the wider industry.



Kate Davies, Chief Executive of Notting Hill Genesis, one of the largest housing providers in

the country, was the keynote speaker at a **South East Thames Valley**

"Leading Ladies" virtual event. Kate answered questions on changes to the planning regime, contingency plans in the event of a no deal Brexit and the collaborative role housing associations can play with education providers.



The **South West - Bath** satellite met for Women in Property's first face-to-face catch up, since

lockdown, when a small group got together for coffee and cake in the Timbrell's Yard riverside marquee, in Bradford on Avon.

The **South Wales** branch enjoyed a summer social cook-along with rugby player turned baker Nick Macleod of One Mile Bakery, sponsored by CKL Build Group. There was extensive chat, dough action and flour chaos in the hour long virtual event, which resulted in the creation of a delicious family dinner of Persian baked chicken with couscous and flat breads.



# Success stories

Congratulations to all our members who are achieving great things.



**Vikki Aitkenhead** has been promoted to Head of Environmental Consultancy at Hollis Global



**Joanne Doherty** has moved to West Lothian Council

been ranked in the Top 50 PR companies in the North



**Lucie Barnes** has moved to Brodies LLP as Senior Associate



**Hannah Floyd** has set up PiSQ, an independent furniture consultancy in the Midlands



**Katy Klingopulos** has been promoted to Legal Director BDP Pitman



**Lama Chami** has been promoted to Associate at Knights plc, shortly after returning from maternity leave



**Jayne Garbutt** has been promoted to Communications Director, Transport Engineering at Capita Real Estate and Infrastructure.



**Samantha McCabe** is now a PassivHaus accredited architect



**Tasha Cottell** has joined Willmott Dixon as Principal New Business Manager



**Kirsty Gordon** of CBRE has joined Scottish Power Renewables on secondment, assisting in securing land rights for renewables projects



Belated congratulations to **Lesley Roberts**, Partner at Allsup LLP, who became President of the UK Apartment Association



**Sarah Criddle** of Gleeds has recently trained as a mental health first aider



**Priya Vadgama** has moved to Rentplus-UK as Midlands Area Manager



**Julie Diamond** has been appointed Principal Environmental Planner at Capita Real Estate and Infrastructure



**Monica Green's** company Partners Group has once again



**Carly Willis** has joined Mobius Construct as Divisional Director