

Chair's column

by Rachel Bell, National Chair #StandTall

When I took on this role in March I shared with you my guiding word for the year: Courage. This word has become a lighthouse for me as the year marches on. In all honesty it's been hard to juggle my roles and responsibilities and I've been compelling myself to 'Stand Tall' more frequently. But this is the reality; life can be a constant quest for balance and it's in this rebuilding era - the return to our places of work - when we must really put right those imbalances from the past.

On International Women's Day, we held up our hand and said 'I choose to challenge'. This is crucial for an inclusive recovery. There's lots of talk about Building Back Better and it's important to approach this term holistically. It's not the economy, it's everything, so we must challenge the root causes of inequality in our built environment.

For instance, The NLA's Improving Public Spaces: Women in Planning think tank sparked a thought-provoking debate about why our public spaces are not designed with women's safety, or comfort, in mind. My write up can be read here <https://bit.ly/3db1cgg>

There is light ahead. Flexible and hybrid working can unlock a better balance for many of us, and I hope we can all shrug

off presenteeism as a counter-productive relic of the pre-pandemic world.

It feels like, in this new era, people are talking more openly. It's been a privilege to speak with inspiring trailblazers on my podcast series, Stand Tall. Look out for new episodes on the website <https://bit.ly/3vWZbLt>

As we rebuild, we see how important community is. I was pleased to speak at the Festival of Place's Gender Equal Cities, to share how our Women in Property community has thrived for over three decades.

And that's down to you. So thank you, our members, for your continued support and I'd like to make a special mention for the new regional Chairs, who are working incredibly hard to nurture this community.



Rachel Bell
National Chair of Women in Property

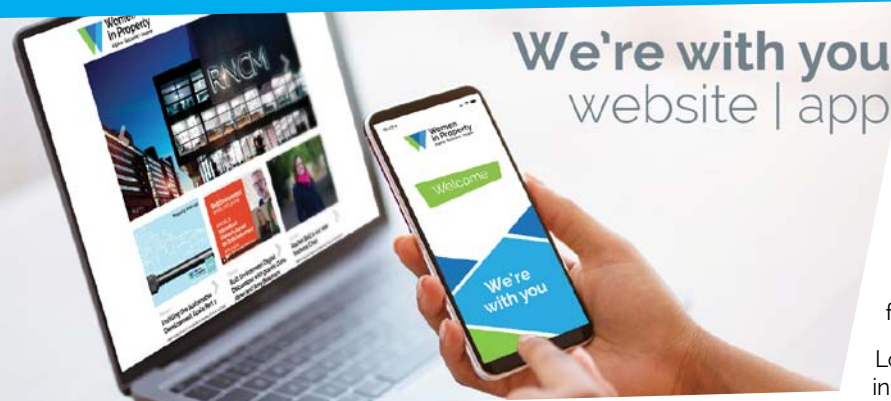
Introducing the Women in Property app

Women in Property members will soon be able to book events, connect with fellow members, renew their membership and review their profile using our very own app.

Michelle Kershaw of MKER Consulting and a former South East Chair, who initiated the app, said,

"We had two main motivations. Firstly, we wanted to help and encourage members to get in touch with each other, for example if they're travelling for a meeting and want to catch up for a coffee afterwards, so the geolocate function is great for that. And we wanted to make it as easy as possible to book events. The app achieves both, it's a huge member benefit and we're really looking forward to seeing it in action."

Look out for news on how to upload the app in the next couple of weeks.



Menopause in the workplace

Rachel Bell, National Chair

"Menopausal women are the largest growing demographic in the workforce. That's huge. Not only that, the majority of women will be menopausal for around a third of their lives, most of them working through it – or trying to.



www.marvellousmidlife.co.uk

Women in Property, recently held a webinar on "Menopause in the workplace", led by Marvellous Midlife coach Laura Shuckburgh (<https://www.marvellousmidlife.co.uk/>). As Laura said, "...now is the time to open the conversation and feel comfortable about saying the word menopause."

Many people will be familiar with the typical image of 'the menopausal woman'...stressed, over-emotional, the hot flushes. But what about the memory loss, forgetting words, lack of focus? Some women have reported being genuinely concerned they were showing symptoms of early-onset dementia, when the real culprit is perimenopause, the years before a woman actually goes through menopause. It is perimenopause that causes so many problems and which most women experience with some

bewilderment, unaware their random symptoms have a name.

Imagine having spent a good twenty years or so building your career, firing on all cylinders, in control, a great investment for your employer. And then things start to change, almost imperceptibly at first but enough for you to question your judgement, ability, professional acumen, social skills. Your colleagues are a little bemused, if not wary. Your employer starts to lose faith. Your confidence takes a nosedive. This is what happens to thousands of women in the workforce, often over a period of years and many don't know why.

Too often women have been so impacted by these invisible symptoms they have felt no other option than to leave their job. This is hard enough for

them but it is an unsustainable situation for business. Losing highly skilled women with such depth and breadth of knowledge is costly for any organisation and fixing the issue should be part of both its retention strategy and Inclusion policy.

So, what to do? Employers are urged to break the taboo, change the language and train people to be aware. Men find this particularly helpful, finally recognising the out of character behaviour of their partners – and colleagues - for what it really is. Extending that recognition across the work environment is of massive value to women going through this long drawn out change.

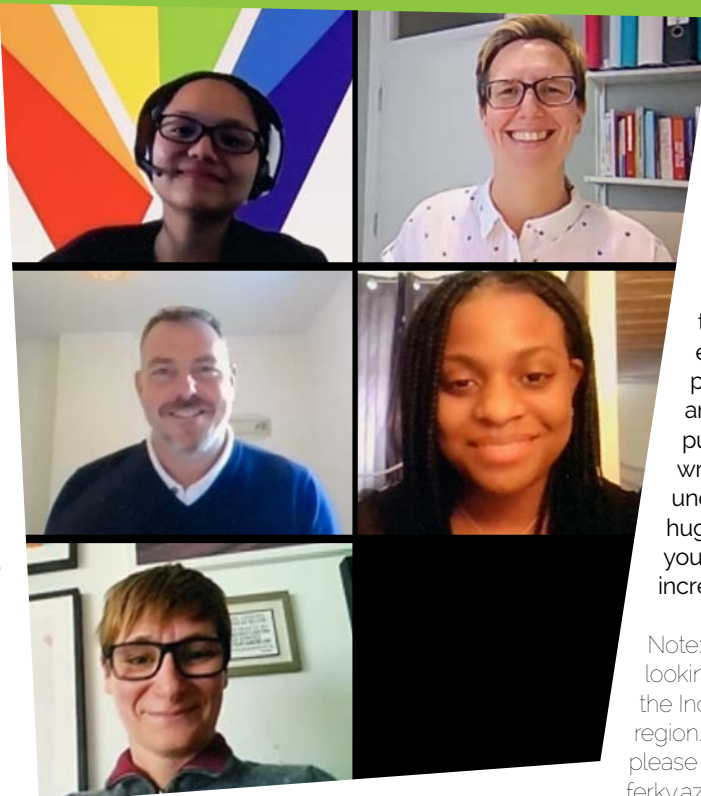
So, talk about menopause, look after these women and they will be enabled and encouraged. The implications of not doing so can be far more serious."

In 2020 Women in Property formed its Inclusion Champions, member representatives from each branch who offer oversight of all the branch is doing with regard to diversity in their region - diversity of gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Over the past few months two events have been organised, by Aurora Tallon for Central Scotland and Nicole Toolseram for the South West, both of which received a great response.

The first, "Lessons learnt from Lockdown on inclusivity", kindly sponsored by ThreeSixty Architecture, was the subject of a panel discussion chaired by former National Chair, Monica Green, with Adrian Lui of Glasgow Caledonian University, Amanda McKay of Balfour Beatty and Jane Gotts of Gen Analytics.

Just ahead of Pride Month, the South West branch partnered with Freehold, to run a discussion exploring what it means to be an LGBTQ+ ally within the workplace and what we can do better to

Inclusion and Allies



bolster inclusivity in the industry. Panellist Kelly Canterford of Tigrou talked through strategies for being an active, visible ally as well as building an inclusive environment.

She was joined by Sarah Rock of Fladgate, Scott Parsons of URW and Aurora Barrett of Savills, who shared their experiences and anecdotal moments, good and bad. Key take-aways from the event were to 'find the language' – be patient with everyone, take the time with people no matter who they are; be prepared to call out in public, when something is clearly wrong or is making a colleague uncomfortable; and it matters a huge amount that people have your back, straight allies are incredibly important.

Note: The South East branch is looking for a member to take on the Inclusion Champion role for the region. If you'd like to know more, please contact branch chair, ferky.azib@stewart.com

Who will be the Best of the Best?



The National Student Awards have been celebrated across the UK, with the first round in the Awards programme. This year 119 students representing 54 Universities, went before 55 judges, across 13 judging panels, all of which were held on Zoom. Quite an organisational feat and a brilliant achievement for all the students involved. In May and June our branches held their Awards events – on Zoom for a second year running – when the 13 regional winners were announced. Next stop is the national judging panel which will be held on 16th September, followed by the Best of the Best Awards dinner at Claridge's*, when we hear who has won the national title. A huge thank you to all our Awards branch co-ordinators and to our sponsors, nationally Bouygues and Savills and regionally Amazon, Curtins, Ecus, Gleeds, HBD, Hydrock, ISG, JMW, Pinsent Masons and Willmott Dixon. *subject to Government guidance

Sarah Bradshaw, Architecture, Huddersfield University

Amy Bull, Structural Engineering & Architecture, University of Sheffield

Madeleine Clarke, Architectural Technology, Coventry University

Daniela Federer, Interior & Environmental Design, University of Dundee

Paige Gough, Construction Management, Portsmouth University

Abby Hopes, Architecture, Glasgow School of Art

Charity Mwambeyu, Civil Engineering, University of Bristol

Annabel Reed, Interior Design, Cardiff Metropolitan

Josie-Mae Richards, Masters Planning & Real Estate, University of Manchester

Elizabeth Rimmer, Landscape Architecture, Gloucestershire University

Chloe Swarbrick, Quantity Surveying Consultancy, Kingston University

Jenny Townsend, Civil Engineering, Loughborough University

Issey Wassell, Planning and Property Development, Oxford Brookes University

The Women in Property Hardship Fund



The challenges of the past sixteen months have brought into sharp focus the importance of a supportive community, both personally and professionally. With this in mind and initiated by the South West branch, Women in Property has

introduced a Hardship Fund for any member, irrespective of location, who is finding it difficult to pay the annual membership fee but still wishes to be part of the organisation.

If you are in this position, please email Lara.Farey@membership@womeninproperty.org.uk, with details of your current situation which could

include, for example, maternity leave ending during furlough, or having been on furlough on reduced pay followed by redundancy, or redundancy with no job in sight. The only application criteria is that you must have been a member for two years or more. Each application will be considered anonymously, on its own merits, by Keith Clarke, a member of the Women in Property Advisory Board.

Empowerment and stress resilience through movement

"I'm a Client Relationship Manager by day and sweat buddy fitness instructor at the crack of dawn.

Jo Jones,
Clancy Consulting



Over the course of 2020, alongside national restrictions, working from home and trying to maintain a degree of motivation, I was relieved and equally delighted to have passed a series of fitness and nutrition exam goals. I am now qualified as a L2 fitness instructor, L3 Personal training coach and after two years of study I also finally nailed my Level 4 Diploma in nutrition and weight management.

So, what has this got to do with property, construction and online networking? I joined the West Midlands committee at the start of 2021 and wanted to use my knowledge to motivate others to move more but also show everyone that exercise can be fun and, in turn, empowering through anaerobic strength. Movement helps us bond and feel a true sense of connection with others.

For 30 minutes we have one eye on the prize and our brains are totally focused on attaining this. When we exercise we feel confident, empowered and capable. Chemical reactions in the body begin to change the function and structure of our brain in ways that make us more resilient to stress.

We all need a confidence boost and even though we have all shifted to an online format, when we move with other people and know they are there it creates a strong sense of "bigger than self", which in turn makes everyone feel more optimistic and empowered.

Movement should be fun, with an emphasis on how it makes us feel rather than an end goal.

All that's needed is 6ft x 4ft space, a mat, some water and a great attitude to get both the body and grey matter engaged.

Mentoring in Lockdown

Sandi Rhys Jones OBE

What lockdown and furlough have highlighted is the importance of human interaction in the workplace. If you're on your own, it's pretty difficult to learn on the job or to take an objective approach to issues that arise, so it's not surprising that there is an increase in demand for mentoring. In response, we have adapted the Women in Property cross-disciplinary mentoring scheme, which has been running for more than ten years, to deliver training and support virtually.

After initial dismay at losing face to face contact with members around the UK, we have found unexpected positives in bringing together people in a virtual room from around the country – not to mention savings in travel time and costs. To compensate for shorter sessions, we have introduced a mentoring club to discuss common topics and a boardroom forum for senior women.

Mentoring is especially important for those starting on their careers, so Women in Property has also sustained its Student



Florence Clarke, national finalist
Student Awards 2020

Awards programme, and regional finalists all benefit from the mentoring scheme. One of the 2020 regional winners, Florence Clarke, gained work experience at Savills in September and has been taken on to the graduate programme starting this autumn.

Mentoring is a well-regarded benefit of being in Women in Property, both for individuals and their employers. For information, visit <https://www.womeninproperty.org.uk/career-development/mentoring/>

Branch News



HAYMARKET
WHERE EDINBURGH CONNECTS

Central Scotland branch were delighted to see some of their members face to face for their first in person site visit to the impressive Haymarket Edinburgh development. The site by QMile and M&G Real Estate is a hive of construction activity and the group learned about its sustainability measures and plans for improvements to the surrounding area, and arrival from Haymarket train station.



The **Highlands and Islands** branch have run a Development series, to highlight the talented professionals and their work in the region. Part 1 showcased WASPS Creative Academy, led by Stuart Mackellar and Heather Graham of LDN Architects, and Rory Kellett and Gina Colley of Threesixty Architecture, joined by client Jo Murray, about the Victorian Market. In Part 2, Catriona Hill of Oberlanders, Callum Maclean of MAAC Studio and Russell Eggleton of Abound Design introduced the Strathnaver Museum in Bettyhill.

The **Midlands** branch hosted a virtual gin tasting event kindly sponsored by Feldon Dunsmore Solicitors. Led by Midlands



based self-proclaimed 'gin raconteur', the Gintleman, attendees enjoyed three tasting combinations tailored especially for the event, served alongside recommended garnishes and snacks plus a good dose of humour from the host.



Northern Ireland Rights of Light is completely separate from the planning process but is a legally enforceable easement, so it seemed logical for a lawyer, Joanna Robinson of Pinsent Masons LLP and a surveyor, Emily Hyde of GIA Surveyors to come together to discuss the complexities of this issue. The webinar touched on the general understanding of rights of light, how light is measured, remedies for infringements of rights and mitigation measures should those rights be infringed.



The **North West** branch enjoyed a poignant and heart-warming tour of Manchester City Centre with Danny Collins of Invisible Manchester, who took guests on an eclectic journey of statues, tunnels, a canal, passing hidden gems and citations of poetry. This was the first 'in person' event since lockdown started and was much enjoyed and much needed!

Solent Ten Women In Property members were lucky enough to be offered the use of sailing yacht 'The Magenta Project' by Sunsail Events, complete with a professional skipper and lunch provided by Stride Treglown. The Magenta Project is a collective of passionate people committed to developing pathways and generating opportunities for women in performance sailing. We were fortunate to have Elaine Penhaul of Lemon & Lime Interiors join us as First Mate, who was able to share some interesting



Branch News Continued

between being a female entrepreneur in the property industry and being female in the world of sport. After a lengthy run of home working for many, a day on the water was a much needed contribution to regaining some balance and wellbeing.



The **South East** has been running a Design Challenges series, most recently inviting Katia Polidoro, director of tp bennett and Simon Wilkes, Head of Development at LGIM, to discuss 'Reimagining Rackhams', the proposed

redevelopment of the former Rackhams department store in Birmingham. Although in a great location, the building is complex and challenging but the plans put forward by the design team are inspirational and will result in the best of hotel, office, leisure and retail, complete with gym, cycle route and a roof bar/restaurant.

Interested in organising events like this? There are opportunities to be involved in the South East committee, so if you think this could be for you, please contact branch Chair, ferky.azib@stewart.com.

Yorkshire & North East is establishing an Outreach Subcommittee, to help shape the way Women in Property inspires younger generations in the region. If you have a great careers education idea that could be accelerated through our platform and would like to be part of a friendly group who share the same passion, you are invited to join a team of proactive professionals to help kick-start the initiative. The only criteria is that you're a member of the Yorkshire & North East branch. Contact katie@hbd.co.uk for further details.

Success Stories

Congratulations to members who have moved up or on...



Julie Benson is now Associate at jmachitects



Heather Lindley-Clapp has been promoted to Director of Nexus Planning



Margherita Cesca has been appointed Director of Architecture with Lanpro



Tomasin Reilly has been promoted to Senior Associate with Clyde & Co LLP



Anna Chew has moved to City and County as Head of Planning



Katie Saunders partner at Trowers Hamlins LLP, has been elected to the board of the Housing Forum



Julie Fawcett has joined Big Yellow Storage as Head of Estates & Facilities



Sam Tetlow is now Senior Counsel, Global Real Estate at Pearson



Kal Gill Faci has been accepted to the Fabric Advisory Committee for Manchester Cathedral



Catherine Thornhill has been promoted to Land Manager with Barratt and David Wilson Homes, Northern Scotland



Suzy Hollins has moved to Plumlife Homes as Head of Sales



Melanie Koyman has become Senior Marketing Executive for Waterman Group



Jenny Wilkes has been promoted to Associate with Quantem



Listen to our latest podcast when Rachel Bell talks to Priya Shah, founder of BAME in Property. Listen [here](#).

For further information on the Association contact Fiona Alfred OBE, Executive Director on 0207 603 4746 or email executivedirector@womeninproperty.org.uk www.womeninproperty.org.uk

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