

Chair's column

by Chithra Marsh, National Chair

And...breathe. These are busy but exciting times for Women in Property. We have just celebrated another incredible cohort of students at the National Student Awards Final – more on this below and over the page.

By the time you read this, my Vice Chair Jennifer Winyard and I will have participated in a panel discussion at UK Construction Week at the NEC, followed by the inaugural Property Week Inspirational Women in Property Awards, for which WiP itself and a number of our members were all finalists.

We have assessed and decided upon the location of the next National Conference – see page 7 for early details of that, and of course there are all the amazing events that our branches are running across the country, and virtually.

And, as a backdrop to all of this, I am delighted that we are also making very positive progress with the 'behind the scenes' activity, resulting from the hard work of the Task Groups over the past couple of years. On page 5 you will read more on current and future thinking from National, including the member survey, KPIs, Strategy workshops, business planning and - bringing us back down to earth – the introduction of VAT. I look forward to giving you further updates in due course.

Wishing you all a productive and positive few weeks, as we approach the next holiday season.



Chithra Marsh
National Chair of Women in Property

The Best of the Best: Elsie wins the 2023 National Student Awards



L to R: Chithra Marsh, Vicki Odili, Elsie Gribbon, Yvonne Lee and Francois Bierer

An Interior Architecture and Design student from Birmingham City University has won the 2023 National Student Awards. Elsie Gribbon claimed the top prize, competing against 12 other students in the national final, in the Awards programme which saw 109 students participate from across the UK.

National Chair Chithra Marsh, director at Buttress Architects, sat on the judging panel alongside Francois Bierer of Amazon, Phillippa Prongué of Linkcity, the international property development arm of Bouygues UK, Yvonne Lee of Savills, and Vicki Odili, of tp bennett, all national sponsors of the Awards.

They described Elsie as "professionally eloquent...authentic in her empathetic approach. She stands for change and paving the way for others to follow into the industry." They noted a couple of Elsie's quotes including "Empathy is what inspires change...This is all about making a positive difference based on our own life experience. Every day is a gift to me." Congratulations Elsie!

National Student Awards

Sponsored by:

amazon



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networking organisation | advancement of women | established careers | actively involved in property and construction | national body

Celebrating the 17th National Student Awards

The National Student Awards Final is always an amazing, if intense day. While the Best of the Best Dinner was held at Claridge's in the evening, the judging panel hosted at Savills started at 8.30am that same morning, running through until the last candidate was seen at 3.45pm.

Each student was asked five questions, which explored their views on industry and wider societal issues. With the Awards Dinner just a few hours later, it was then over to the judges to consider, deliberate, and choose the national winner, a tough decision finally reached at 5pm. Fast forward to 7pm, when guests arrived for the Champagne Reception and Dinner, with guest speakers, 2021 national winner Charity Zawadi Mwambeyu of Ramboll,

and Jason Longhurst, Chair of UK Business Council for Sustainable Development.

Our sincere thanks to representatives from our national sponsors Amazon, Bouygues UK, Savills and tp bennett and to WiP National Chair, Chithra Marsh of Buttress, who formed the 2023 national judging panel. A long, but very rewarding day!



#BestOfTheBest at Claridge's





The Awards Dinner was, as always, a glittering, uplifting event. Guests saw short videos from each of the inspirational national finalists who, in turn, were able to meet and mix with new friends and potential employers. Charity Mwambeyu reminded the students to make the most of the evening saying

"...these Awards have been a building block for me"

- it was a conversation at the 2021 National Final that led to her work placement. She emphasised the importance of support and endorsement, adding "...you are now in a position to champion someone, another student or an early career professional, bring them along to events like this, introduce them to people."



Jason Longhurst focused on Sustainability and the impact of climate change, adjusting his planned speech to recount his recent, traumatic experience close to the epicentre of the Moroccan earthquake. It was only the fact that the building he was staying in had been future-proofed to help mitigate against nature's warning shots, that saved him from serious injury or worse. He went on to advise that the focus for UKBCSD members is to go beyond Net Zero, contributing to each one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. "It is how we partner, engage, innovate and motivate that is so important. Collaboration is critical, we must look at the outcome benefits," and addressing the student finalists, he acknowledged that each one of them had made some reference to sustainability, adding

"don't lose the passion or the focus, you are our future stars."

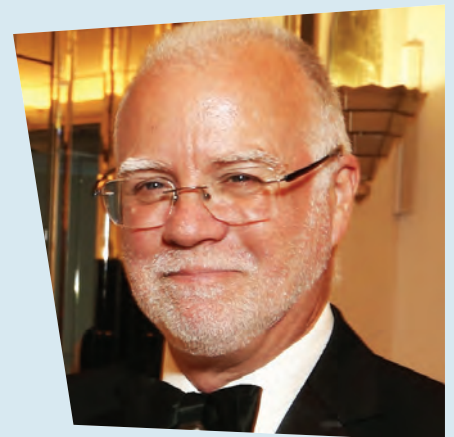
Congratulations again to all the finalists and in particular to national winner, Elsie Gribbon.



Moving on



The Awards have evolved and developed over the past 17 years and two people have been a constant throughout much of this. Vanessa Lancaster, who has also worked on major events for some of our branches and the National Conference earlier this year, was there at the start but is now moving on, to work on new ventures. We would like to thank Vanessa for her calm organisational prowess, her initiative and creativity all of which have gone a long way to make the Awards what they are today.



Iain Holliday has been facilitating the Awards programme for 15 years, overseeing the judging panels at regional and national level, while ensuring a fair and equitable process. Iain too is moving on and we extend our thanks and, no doubt, that of the many Awards judges he has guided over the years.

Wishing you both all the very best.



Positive Thinking

Over the past three years, we have been working behind the scenes on a number of administrative and process-based changes, as we develop and grow the organisation.

Under the leadership of the Directors and National Team and supported by the National Executive, various Task Groups have progressed different workstreams and, during this period, we have reported back to the National Steering Group (NSG), comprising the Chairs and Vice Chairs from across our branches. It is now time to update you on the most significant changes made so far. The early work is nearly complete, but we know there is more to be done in the months and years ahead as Women in Property evolves and grows.

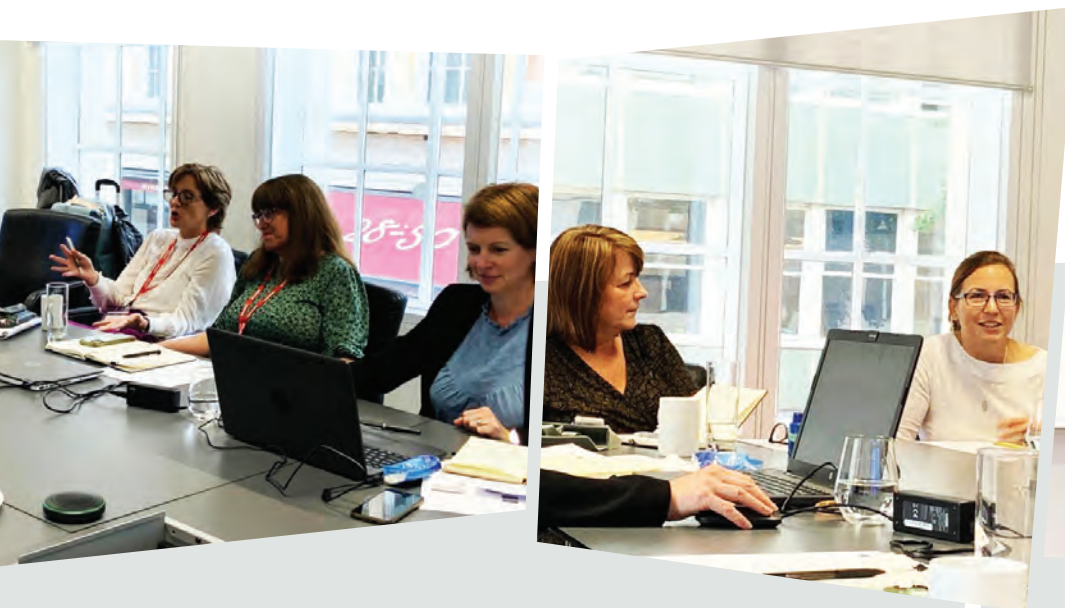
A new Company – Women in Property Ltd

We have taken legal, tax and VAT advice and restructured Women in Property from an Unincorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee. This includes the national organisation, all branches and associated satellites, and three Directors have been appointed, Candice Blackwood, Partner at CMS, Rachel Bell, Director of Partnerships at Stride Treglown and Ann Allen,

Director of Campus Innovation and Development at the University of Leeds. Women in Property is now registered for VAT, which relates to all event fees from 1st September 2023, and the organisation remains 'not for profit'.

Membership Rates

The membership fees have increased slightly, the first rise in two years. We are also introducing a 10% reduction in the fees for those of you who have been members for over five years, and a discounted membership rate for Students, which will be introduced as part of the new WiP app and website updates, that are currently under development.



Strategic Thinking

With the practical business issues in hand, we are now setting our sights on the ongoing evolution of Women in Property. It is critical that we ensure the organisation's relevance for the future, as we continue to deliver a valuable, supportive network for our members and supporters.

With this in mind, in June we invited NSG to take part in a KPI workshop addressing 13 core themes including Brand, Events, Data Collection, Governance and Infrastructure,

Communication and Marketing, Membership and Sponsorship. We also ran a Membership Survey which many of you responded to – thank you – as well as a Mentoring

Survey. All of this provided invaluable material for a Strategy Workshop held in September, led by National Chair Chithra Marsh and attended by two of our Directors, and the National Teams. The next steps will be the preparation of a Five-Year Business Plan, that will set the priorities, inform the goals and feed the aspirations of the business. It was clear though, that one of the greatest assets we have is the camaraderie and strength of relationships that so many of our members share. We will keep you updated on progress, in the coming months.



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Women in Property's CPD Series

Over the last year, Women in Property has introduced CPD accredited events, ranging from webinars, to in person seminars and site studies. To date, we have hosted 65 sessions and issued 1,966 CPD hours. Here's a preview of just a few of the CPD events scheduled in the coming weeks but keep an eye on the [events pages](#) as more sessions are added on a regular basis.



Climate Change Mitigation: What steps can an organisation take?

24th October 11am,
Virtual

The scientific community has clearly stated the need to reach 'Net Zero' global carbon dioxide emissions by mid-century, in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C and to avoid the most devastating impacts of climate change on human society and nature. But what does a credible route to Net Zero look like for an organisation? Hosted by Snigdha Jain and Fin Maguire of Turley Sustainability and ESG, the session will explore the various steps that market-leading businesses are taking to reduce their emissions, including commitments to science-based targets, and carbon literacy training to empower employees as we approach Net Zero. What steps are you taking?

Celebrating Black History Month with RIBA NW

25th October 12.30,
Virtual

The talk will touch upon this year's theme of 'celebrating our sisters' and will be hosted by Chithra Marsh, Director at Buttress, National Chair

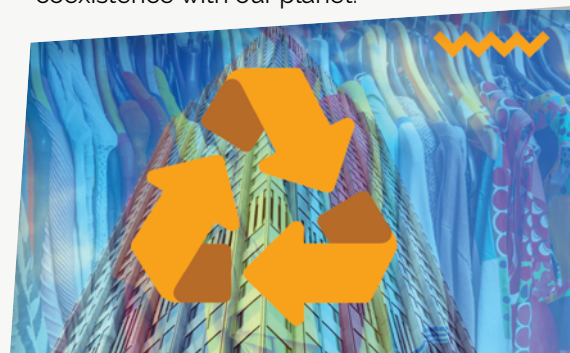
of Women in Property and co-chair of the RIBA North West EDI Group. The event will introduce speakers with differing perspectives and backgrounds in the construction industry to speak for around 10 - 15 minutes each, then opening up to a discussion and taking questions from the audience, with everyone welcome to join the conversation.



Threads of Sustainability: Swapping styles, Shaping spaces

1st November, 5.30pm,
Glasgow

Director and Head of Sustainability at Wallace Whittle, David Spiteri will draw parallels between the fashion industry and the world of building design and construction, highlighting the critical role that sustainable practices play in both realms as we work towards a more environmentally conscious and socially responsible future. Here, we explore the shared principles and innovative approaches that can guide both sectors towards a more sustainable and harmonious coexistence with our planet.



Allan Binns
Safety Director

Dr Melanie Robinson
Associate / Digital Strategy Lead

Building Safety Act and the Golden Thread

17th October, 11.45am,
Newcastle

Building Safety should be a priority for any building owner and often understanding the requirements of the new Building Safety Act and the expectations of the Building Safety Regulator can be challenging. Hosted by Ryder Architecture, the speakers will discuss critical and imminent change in building safety regulations in the UK. This session will cover building safety, the Building Safety Act and the golden thread – how to develop a building safety case, simplifying the requirements and identifying what needs to be prioritised, what new measures to put in place and how to take action.

National News

Conference is heading to Scotland

After reviewing submissions from our branches across the UK, the National Team has selected Scotland for the next Property Conference hosted by Women in Property. The main event will be in Edinburgh on Thursday 14th November, with events on the evening of 13th and with site studies on 15th. The planning is already underway so pencil it in your diaries and look out for more details, which will follow soon.



Property Week's inaugural Inspiring Women in Property Awards

Women in Property is delighted to be an Association Partner in Property Week's 'Inspiring Diversity in Property' campaign, launched in June 2023. The broad programme of activity aims to drive real change in the sector by recognising and embracing those organisations that are committed to improving diversity and working to encourage companies and individuals to set specific, measurable goals and work towards them.

The campaign will also highlight issues, offer benchmarking, and provide tools, practical advice and strategies to help organisations achieve a more diverse workforce in the coming years.

As part of the campaign, Property Week hosted its inaugural Inspiring Women in Property Awards on 5th October, hosted by Oti Mabuse. Congratulations to Coralie McKeivor, of Freeths who won EDI Champion of the Year,



Coralie McKeivor



Laura James

and Laura James of Baker Hicks who won EDI Champion of the Year, Financial and Professional Services. The National Student Awards programme was awarded Highly Commended in the EDI Programme of the Year Category, with Savills winning the main Award in that category. Well done to members Samantha McCabe of Oberlanders Architects, Helen Pickstock of Coutts & Co and Caterina Polidoro of tp bennett, who were all shortlisted. National Chair, Chithra Marsh presented Vicky Kelly of Thornley Groves with the Award for Returner of the Year, Financial and Professional Services.



How do you measure Social Value?



This was the question up for debate for a panel curated by WiP for UK Construction Week, at the NEC on 5th October. National Chair Chithra Marsh and National Vice Chair Jennifer Winyard were joined by Rhiannon Kilgariff from ISG and Jennifer Clark of CSR Accreditation to explore issues ranging from scheme viability to the constraints upon developers and contractors in terms of 'implementing' biodiversity and people-focused initiatives, and the fact that there is no widely used metric for social value.

London Build 15th – 16th November 2023

We are once again pleased to partner with London Build which takes place at Olympia, London. Chithra Marsh will be speaking on two panels, Beyond the Binary: Supporting Gender Diversity in the construction industry, on the 15th, and on the 16th Empowering Women in Construction: Navigating bias and stereotypes. Rachel Bell, WiP Director and Director of Stride Treglown will also be speaking on this session. To register visit [here](#).



Autumn Property Outlook: what are the economic drivers for landlords?

Women in Property members were invited to attend a recent webinar hosted by RSM. With more than 300 delegates in attendance, RSM experts explored how the economic outlook is impacting property prices, trends in the debt markets for businesses, and how tax policy is driving sector activity.

Here Michaela Seager, Associate Director, Tax, outlines the key discussion points.

"The changing economic environment is bringing a new wave of challenges for businesses, especially as the increase in interest rates is adding to affordability constraints. Consumers continue to be cautious about spending and are staying put in their existing homes, while on the supply side there has been a significant downturn in housebuilding.

Although the appetite for real estate lending has reduced, there remains an underlying demand across the market, so it is important businesses understand tax changes, and how they shape the economy.

Given the liquidity of real estate, government has often used the sector as a tool to generate tax revenues, impacting industry investment. The most significant changes have affected non-UK residents investing in UK property, including:

- ◆ The widening of capital gains tax rules
- ◆ Corporation tax on rental income
- ◆ Non-resident stamp duty land tax (SDLT) surcharge

Similar taxes have been introduced to UK residents investing in property, however, the SDLT holiday introduced



Michaela Seager,
Associate Director, Tax

by government during the pandemic and changes to capital allowances rules have helped keep the property market afloat.

These tax rules are driving sector change, with recent data showing that 74% of landlords aiming to purchase buy to let property in the next 12 months, plan to do so by a limited company. This is perhaps due to the change in mortgage interest deductions, whereas limited companies may offer a tax-efficient alternative. 55% of delegates surveyed also said that capital allowances changes will not help to further investment or expansion plans.

The changing tax landscape presents challenges and opportunities for real estate investors, requiring additional planning to mitigate potential tax costs. However nearly half (45%) of delegates said an SDLT cut would have the most impact, followed by corporation tax (21%) and income tax (21%). Ahead of the Autumn Budget in November, the government should really consider these in its decision-making."

For more information and to watch the recording of the webinar, please [click here](#).

Success stories



Rhiannon Baxendell has set up her own business, RB Heritage Ltd, where she is Heritage Consultant and Director



Helen Daley has launched her own company, HLR Construction & Engineering Law



Faye Durkin from Greengage Environmental has contributed to the True North Report which discusses the challenges the region faces, the opportunities ahead and the role of business in driving progress for a brighter and greener future



Louise Emmott is one of North West Insider's Property Disruptors 2023



Abby Glendinning is starting a new role as Senior Property Advisor at Welsh Government in its land team, established to ensure that the best use is made of public land for public good



Catalina Ionita has been shortlisted for Innovator of the Year at the I Love Manchester Awards



Toni Riddiford and **Coralie McKeivor** are among South West Insider's twenty Future Leaders



Laura Ruxton and **Julie Smyth** have both been promoted to Directors at Corstorphine & Wright, Laura leading the Healthcare team and Julie heading the Care and Senior Living Team



Aurora Tallon, Central Scotland Chair, has joined Baker Hicks as Senior Architect

Branch News



Central Scotland Branch Chair, Aurora Tallon, recently had an opinion piece published in national newspaper, The Scotsman where she referred to, through Women in Property, joining the steering group for the National Equity and Inclusion Plan for the construction industry in Scotland.

Launched by the Construction Leadership Forum, the plan is designed to encourage the development of a more diverse workforce in the construction industry. The plan sets out 'Six by 2026' measurable, strategic aims which the CLF is committed to deliver in partnership with both private and public sector stakeholders.



Lancashire & Cumbria Speakers from Cumberland Council and University of Cumbria have been involved in securing the £80M funding and managing delivery of public realm projects to preserve the history of Carlisle, including the Carlisle Rail Station, city pedestrian enhancement schemes and The Citadel

University Campus. Guests heard about the masterplan; the discrete projects and the programme which will see the first piece of the jigsaw on the ground before the end of the year.



North West The Annual Summer BBQ took place at Black Friar in Salford, raising money for St Ann's Hospice Build It Together appeal. At this sold out event, guests enjoyed conversation, food and live music in the beer garden. Also in the North West, an enthusiastic group of hikers undertook a 26km hike covering three peaks of Cheshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire, in support of the remarkable Diane Modahl Sports Foundation. They raised an amazing £3000 for the Manchester based charity, which aids young individuals to excel in sports, education and community involvement.



South West Rachel Hamilton and Luke Brennan, Directors of Simon Morray-Jones Architects hosted a tour of the Newt's award winning, exclusive spa as well as a private tour of the main hotel, Hadsphen House. Housed in a former Cow Barn in the Stable Yard, the spa has been beautifully transformed, the connection with nature at The Newt integral to its design. Even the garden botanicals are grown specifically to create the restorative treatments within the spa. The original 17th century Hadsphen House has been transformed into a luxury and award winning hotel, the design contemporary without losing the essence of a Georgian family home.



Thames Valley Members attended a CPD site study at Headington Hill Hall, in Oxford, to see first-hand the £60m redevelopment by Willmott Dixon and ADP Architecture. The development incorporates new teaching and engineering buildings within a Grade II listed estate designed to transform science, technology, engineering, mathematics and creative activities on the campus.



Yorkshire & North East

Hannah Richardson is stepping down from the committee, after ten years with Women in Property, including an extended post as branch Chair from 2017 - 2019, National Student Awards branch Ambassador and her role on the National Advisory Board. Thank you, Hannah, for your commitment and support over the years.



Members had an "ace" time learning to play golf at Rudding Park and whilst they agreed they probably have a "fairway" to go before they're up to par, they really enjoyed themselves. Thanks to MPG for sponsoring the networking event.