

## Conclusion

This is a working document, our work in progress. It will be reviewed annually to ensure we are cognisant of the marketplace, and the social and political world in which we operate. In this way we hope it will remain agile and flexible, to best meet the needs of our members.

# WiP Futures Five Year Plan

## Glossary

WiP website  
Governance Structure  
Handbook  
Terms of Reference

 Women in Property  
 WomenInProperty





Candice Blackwood

## The Chair of the Limited Board Statement

This is a pivotal moment for Women in Property. Over the last 37 years, our organisation has grown from a small group of committed, South East based professionals seeking a supportive industry network, to the vibrant, national organisation it is today. But what of tomorrow? We are on the cusp of tremendous growth as our influence – and membership – increase. In the interests of greater governance and transparency, we have moved from being an unaffiliated Association, to a Company Limited by Guarantee, while maintaining our not-for-profit status.

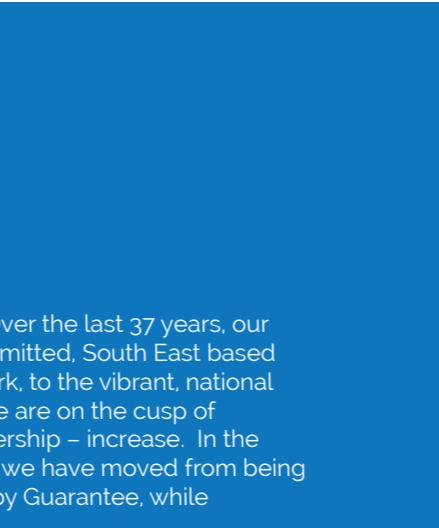
We are growing our Board of Directors and Non-Executive Directors, to ensure we have the skills and expertise needed at Leadership level to take the organisation forward. We are funded both through our membership fees, and any profit made from our events, which are invested back into the organisation, at Branch and National level. Each of our branches and the national organisation have financial reserves, a safeguard should there be a damaging economic downturn (we've survived three serious recessions since our launch in 1987). We have strict policies in place, that ensure funds are only used on initiatives and activity that is for the benefit of our members.

All this has been achieved over the past three years and is our 'here and now', but we have our eyes firmly set on the future. This document – our Five-Year Plan – outlines our direction of travel. Through discussions with our Directors, National Team, National Steering Group, as well as consulting with our membership (through membership surveys), and seeking the views of external organisations, we have arrived at a Vision, three key pillars and a set of objectives, which will shape the way in which we evolve over the next few years.

We are confident this will deliver great things for Women in Property and look forward to your ongoing support, as we make it a reality.

### Vision

**"We will provide an intelligent, supportive, influential network for our members and allies working in the property and construction industry"**



## The National Team Statement

Women in Property is an organisation whose values are founded on fairness, inclusion and social responsibility. The membership is bound by a collective aspiration to grow awareness, knowledge and recognition of gender issues in this industry.

We firmly believe that Women in Property is as relevant today as it was when it first launched, in 1987. The industry has taken some great strides forward and we celebrate the people and organisations who are working hard to bring about lasting change...but there is a way to go.

Women in this industry remain underrepresented and there is still a requirement for the metaphorical 'safe space'. The positive action that Women in Property propagates is very different to discrimination. Nevertheless, we look forward to the day when we, and organisations like ours, are redundant simply because they are no longer needed.

This doesn't mean that Women in Property will not change. Far from it. This Business Plan has come about precisely because we recognise the need to sustain the organisation and ensure its relevance for the future. We would like to thank our Directors, National Steering Group and National Exec Team for their input into a plan that will help lay the path for the next few years.

We have identified three pillars based around our brand value words Aspire, Succeed and Inspire which are integrated into everything we do. And we continue our commitment to three focus areas namely Outreach, Mentoring and the National Student Awards, which form the basis of our ongoing activity.

Ultimately, all of this is about our members. We know that the majority joined Women in Property for the business networking and personal and professional development. These are a given. What has come as a welcome bonus for so many is the camaraderie, friendships and the sense of being part of a wider team. Like the organisation, these relationships are strong and enduring.

Jennifer Winyard, National Chair 2024-25

Emma Richman, National Vice Chair 2024-25  
Chithra Marsh, immediate past National Chair 2023-24



Jennifer Winyard



Emma Richman



Chithra Marsh

# The Women in Property Organisational Structure

As part of the new structure, we have a Limited Company Board, National Team, National Steering Group and National Executive Team.

The **Limited Company Board**, offers strategic oversight, guidance to the National Team and approval of major financial expenditure.

It is the **National Team** which has operational responsibility for the organisation on a day-to-day basis, led by the National Chair and supported by her National Vice Chair and immediate past National Chair. In this way, over a three-year rolling term, there is the guidance, experience and longevity in place to ensure a smooth transition for each incoming National Chair.

The National Chair is selected by the National Team and Limited Board from among the long-serving branch committee members across the UK, particularly those who have previously held Branch Chair roles. Her official term in office starts on 1st March and runs through to 28th/29th February each year, also reflecting our financial year.

Each of our seven branches is led by a Chair and Vice Chair, heading their regional committee which itself comprises a number of operational roles, including Membership, Treasury, Inclusion, Outreach, Social Media and, of course, Events. Both the Branch Chair and Vice Chair sit on the **National Steering Group (NSG)** which meets on a quarterly basis, in person and virtually. They are the voice of their regional members at national level and are involved in decision making and consultation with the National Team. Sitting on a Branch Committee allows members to gain valuable 'board' experience, which is transferable into their professional work.

A number of our Branches have affiliated groups, to extend their reach in the region. Known previously as Satellites, these will soon be called WIP Event Hubs, and are essentially made up of smaller events committees, run by members who have a knowledge and understanding of their local areas.

All of the roles referred to above are voluntary. We are extremely grateful to all of those who invest their time, commitment and enthusiasm into managing their part of our 'business', which nationally has over 1,600 'employees'.

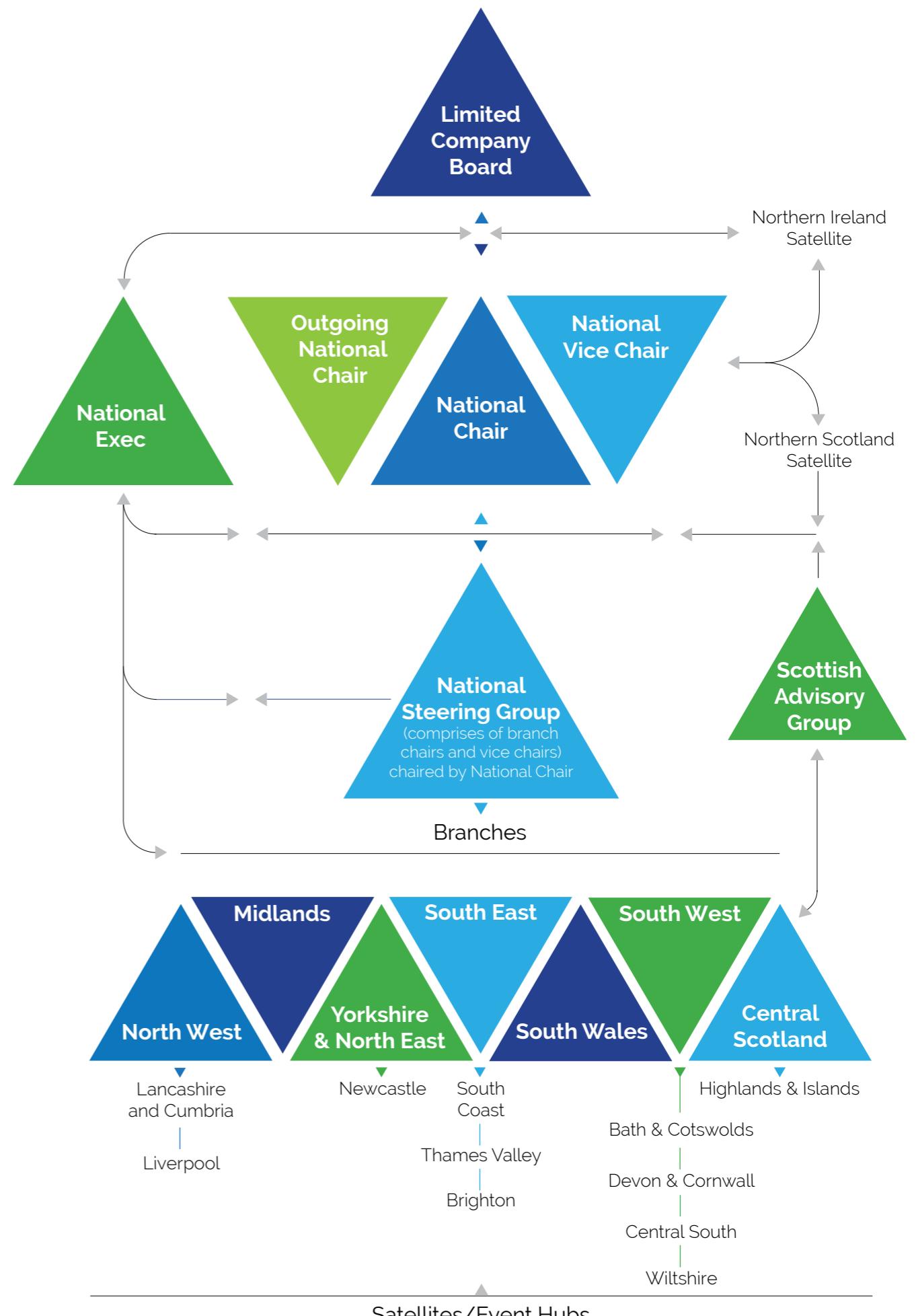
**The National Executive Team**, or National Exec as it is known, are paid consultants brought to Women in Property for their expertise. All have a deep understanding of the way in which the organisation operates and, although all are virtual, they work closely together on flexible hours. Their purpose is to support the National Team and the branches and, in doing so, action everything that is required to help run the business efficiently and effectively.

**They are:**

**Lara Farey** National Membership and Mentoring Administrator, Events and Website Support

**Sue Maguire** Partnerships and Comms Lead

**Sara Prince** Treasury, Events Team



"We will provide an intelligent, supportive, influential network for our members and allies working in the property and construction industry"

### We influence

Respected as an EDI commentator, we use an intelligent, professional approach to encourage a more diverse, inclusive and balanced industry



Our national coverage gives members access to branches across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, where they enjoy events regionally and nationally, both in person and virtually and on a range of topics.

We encourage personal and professional development through CPD accredited events, a unique Mentoring Programme and the WiP People-Innovation-Place national Summit.

### We support our members

Through our events, collaborative partnerships and network of sponsors and allies, our message is one of support, friendship and teamwork



We help members develop supportive professional friendships and networks and enhance business development connections. Through serving on our branch committees members gain strategic 'board' experience, all important for career advancement.

Our cross-discipline Mentoring Programme is a two-way learning partnership, and free to all members, a great way to learn from the next generation.

Members can speak at, host or sponsor events, raising the profile of both member and employer.

### We educate and inform

From Schools Outreach to University workshops, CPD accredited events, to media and panel discussions, we share our expertise and industry know-how



We actively participate with diverse partner groups including the All Party Parliamentary Group for Women and Work, national exhibitions including London Build and UKREiiF, the RIBA, RICS and RTPI, Real Estate Balance, Building People, Property Week's Inspiring Diversity in Property campaign, and Women on Boards, as well as many other industry bodies and businesses. We use our influence and visible presence to inform and encourage a working world that engenders respect for all, creates balance, flexibility, honesty and professionalism.



## A working document

This Business Plan is a working draft, that will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis by the National Team with assistance from the Chair of the Limited Board and National Exec. Fundamental to its development, and working with NSG, we explored a series of KPIs under thirteen different headings, which we refer to as our 'Groundwork' action points and which underline everything we do.

- ▶ **Membership**  
We have added new membership categories to allow reduced rates for students and long service members.  
We also continue to consult on options for male allies/those who identify as male.
- ▶ **Mentoring**  
An important member benefit. We are addressing response times for matching, as well as actively seeking new mentors
- ▶ **National Student Awards**  
Now in 18th year, the programme will run in this format until its 21st year. Meanwhile we are exploring other formats and audiences
- ▶ **Outreach**  
Encouraging young people of all genders to consider a career in the industry, is a vital part of our ethos. Outreach is a priority across the organisation
- ▶ **Partnerships**  
In the spirit of collaboration and shared learning, we work with other organisations to raise our profile, extend our reach and be a voice for good in the industry
- ▶ **Events**  
We run over 500 events each year, from CPD workshops and site visits, to networking and wine tasting. The majority are open to non-members, and we strive to be as inclusive as possible
- ▶ **Sponsorship**  
WiP has a great 'offer' and is attractive to sponsors. As a not-for-profit, sponsorship helps us enormously and allows us to run excellent events. All moneys raised are reinvested at branch or national level.
- ▶ **Comms**  
As part of WiP's profile raising our National Chair regularly comments in trade press features or appears on speaker panels and webinars. We aim to offer members similar, if the opportunity arises
- ▶ **Brand**  
This extends to everything, from our visual appearance, our tone of voice, the events we run and the company we keep. We will be working on brand development in due course
- ▶ **Website/App**  
The website is our 'front door' and, with the App, a critical tool for our events function. We have been implementing upgrades behind the scenes but, alongside the brand, a refresh or redesign will be addressed as part of our medium-term planning
- ▶ **Data and Research**  
We only collect basic member data upon joining but do run member surveys which, going forward, are likely to be every two years. We are looking at options to join forces with other organisations to collect industry data
- ▶ **Governance**  
A considerable amount of work has been done in this area, notably the formation of the limited company. Our treasury function has been significantly improved with greatly enhanced efficiencies
- ▶ **People-Innovation-Place Summit**  
In 2023 we held our first national conference for 20 years. This has now evolved into a new 'brand' event, #PIPbyWiP, which takes place on 14th November 2024 in Edinburgh, and then in Manchester in April 2026

## Delivering our vision WiP Futures

We are already implementing many of the ideas and discussion points that emerged from the NSG KPI Workshop in June 2023 and National Strategy Day in September 2023. Some were short term, others longer but because we have limited resources, we are not in a position to action everything as quickly as we would like. At this time, we have three priority areas – Membership, the National Student Awards and Mentoring – all of which are the subject of discussion and development, part of our identity for the future. Our brand values are holistic and run through everything we do. There is so much that interlinks our ethos of collaboration, inclusion, knowledge share and personal fulfilment.

### Membership:

A priority is to grow the membership. In fact, we have seen a 24% increase since pre-Covid which is testament to the fantastic work being done by our National Team and branches in particular. It is their enthusiasm, commitment and vitality that is so appealing to our members and potential members. However, we also know that market conditions can change rapidly, bringing a knock-on effect to membership. This is where our Reserves Policy is so important as it gives each of our branches the safety net, they might require should the economy take another nosedive.

**Male allies** - We are also very mindful of our male allies, many of whom have asked if they can join Women in Property.

We have given this a great deal of thought, have assessed the legalities of opening up our membership, explored it with other partners and membership organisations, as well as asking our members for their thoughts via our membership surveys in 2023 and, again in 2024. The feedback we have received is that Women in Property is an extremely valuable membership organisation and, in short, we should continue to proudly do the work we do, in our current form. But be in no doubt, we will continue to monitor this situation and keep our finger on the industry pulse.



## National Student Awards:

The National Student Awards programme, originally introduced as a 'one off' to celebrate Women in Property's 20th anniversary, is now in its 18th year. Over 1,600 Built Environment degree students have taken part, improving their knowledge of the career options available to them, many securing work placements as a direct result of competing in the Awards, which often translate into permanent positions upon graduation.

It is our intention that the Awards should continue for three more years in its current format, when we will celebrate their 21st anniversary. However, we will soon be reinstating the Awards Task Force, to look at what comes next. It takes time to plan and instigate an excellent Awards programme and we need to ensure we take into account the national curriculum. For our industry to be truly inclusive and diverse, we know it must reach young people from non-traditional backgrounds, those who might not have ever considered a career in property and construction. Our Outreach volunteers are already working with schools and colleges to help spread the word about the opportunities in this industry. We believe that the next iteration of our Awards programme will be for these young people.

## Mentoring:

Women in Property's highly regarded cross-discipline Mentoring Programme has been running for over 20 years, with over 1,000 members going through the process. The role of a mentor is to be an objective, critical friend to help mentees clarify their goals and navigate a route to achieving them. It works both ways though. Mentors also gain a great deal from the mentoring relationship, which provides space for reflection on one's career and abilities which may go unnoticed in the normal working day. We are well aware that the Programme is over-subscribed and are actively seeking new Mentors, as well as looking at additional mentoring partnerships, to ensure that as many members as possible have access to this highly valued scheme, which remains a free member benefit.



# What happens when?

