

Chair's column

by Emma Richman, National Chair

As you will read on the following pages, we held our 19th National Student Awards, in September. This is always a wonderful event, inspirational and heart-warming in equal measure – my congratulations to all the young women who participated this year.

Giving the keynote was Caroline Roberts-Cherry who, as well as being Chair of the Pankhurst Trust, runs her own TV production company. Her words were thought-provoking, funny and stimulating and I wanted to reflect on just some of them here.

She spoke of the importance of strong female role models, hers being her mum and grandma, both of whom always worked. It never occurred to Caroline that women couldn't achieve what they wanted. So, on a recent visit to a school to give a talk to a group of 14-year-old girls, and with those maternal role models framing her own childhood, she was struck by how many hadn't been told they would need to have a plan, so they could support themselves financially. For many, their aspiration was to be a footballer's wife. I for one don't want these girls to miss

out on the career opportunities they could enjoy in our industry. It really shines a light on the importance of Women in Property's Outreach work.

Through her career, Caroline recounted often being asked "As a woman, do you think it's harder to run a business, than a man?" and responding "Well, I have no experience of being a man who runs a business, so I can't really answer that". She shared one unignorable gendered statistic, that female founded businesses receive less than 5% of all investment. We know that many of our members run their own businesses. What has your experience been of this?

Caroline was telling us this, not to dampen the mood, but rather to motivate and encourage us, particularly the students in the room, who will soon be entering the industry. "When things



Emma Richman
National Chair of Women in Property

feel tough, it's not necessarily because of you personally. The odds kind of **are** stacked against you. The challenge is what are you going to do about it? Use that information to give you momentum, towards the first step, on your way to the top."

Ellen shines at National Student Awards



Malik Hussain of Amazon, Susannah Philp of Savills,
Emma Richman WIP National Chair, with Ellen Campbell

A huge congratulations to Ellen Campbell, winner of the 2025 National Student Awards. Ellen, who studies BSc (Hons) Architectural Technology at Leeds Beckett University, claimed the top prize, competing against 15 other students from across the UK in the national final.

As well as studying for her degree part time, Ellen works as a trainee Architectural Technologist for Align Property Partners in North Yorkshire, where she works on both residential and commercial projects across the North East.

Thank you to our national sponsors Amazon and Savills, for their generous support of the Awards programme.

Success all round!

2025 marks the 19th year Women in Property has run its highly acclaimed National Student Awards programme and this year we were thrilled to have 16 national finalists, a record number, representing disciplines including Architecture, Civil Engineering, Planning, Surveying, Interior Design, Construction Project Management, Design Engineering and Development and Construction.

The National Final judging day is intense. Held at Savills, who look after us really well, our team of three intrepid judges met all 16 finalists, starting at 8.30am and running through until late afternoon.

For the students, after a welcome in the 'Green Room', each had 20 minutes in front of the panel, during which time they delivered the answer to one pre-prepared question, followed by responding to a further four, which challenged them on the built environment, current affairs and EDI issues.

A little later – and after a rapid wardrobe change for some – everyone

reconvened at Claridge's for a VIP drinks reception for speakers, sponsors and their guests, before the Champagne and Mocktails reception, and dinner in the splendid Ball Room.

This year, the evening was smoothly compered by National Chair, Emma Richman and National Vice Chair, Sam McCabe, and as well as viewing video compilations introducing each of the student finalists, we heard from two speakers, Rachel Bell, Chair of the Women in Property Limited Board and our keynote, Caroline Roberts-Cherry, Founder and Managing Director of independent television production company, Saffron Cherry Productions.

Meet the National Student Awards 2025 judges:



amazon

Malik Hussain
EMEA Sustainability REI Lead,
Amazon



savills

Susannah Philp
Director, Valuation, Savills



Emma Richman
Executive Director of Operations,
Peaks & Plains Housing Trust
National Chair of
Women in Property





Rachel told us about her long-standing involvement with women's empowerment trips to Malawi, first introduced to her at a Women in Property South West event, and which have had a profound impact on her, both personally and professionally.

"I've spent much of my career supporting women in the built environment — in architecture, in leadership, in construction. But it has been my time in Malawi that remind me each time how we can travel with a purpose and use our skills in so many ways."

Rachel told us about the two days the group spend with local businesswomen where they share skills and learn from each other. She explained the joy of working with Rainbow Hope secondary

"Leadership isn't about titles or being the loudest in the room. It's about creating space for others to rise"

school pupils, who have to pay for their secondary school education, so many struggle to complete the four years. The Malawi experience gives her ... "perspective, a purpose.... and a deeper sense of what leadership truly looks like. Leadership isn't about titles or being the loudest in the room. It's about creating space for others to rise."

Rachel concluded by saying, "Think about where, in your own world, you can create space for someone else to rise. You don't have to travel across the world to make a difference. You just have to be willing to listen, and bold enough to act."



Caroline Roberts-Cherry



Caroline Roberts-Cherry is a busy woman! As well as being MD of Saffron Cherry Productions she is a Trustee at Opera North, a Smartworks MCR ambassador and since 2021 has served as the Chair of the Pankhurst Trust incorporating Manchester Women's Aid.

Her talk touched on a wealth of interesting facts. She referenced the home of the Pankhurst Trust incorporating Manchester Women's Aid, where in 1903 the Pankhursts signed a declaration which was the formation of the WSPU, the Women's Social and Political Union - with the single and sole aim of securing women the vote. And there was the house bought by lawyer Vera Ellison in Manchester that was

opened in 1974 as the first women's refuge outside London, for women fleeing domestic abuse, which Women's Aid still own and run to this day.

The strength of women was an important thread through Caroline's speech, and she was generous in her appreciation of those listening, saying "...it's a privilege to be in a room with all you women on a mission. I am full of admiration for what you have already achieved and what you will go on to do."

Her words, no doubt intended for the students, resonated with all of us, "If there is something that I wish I had been told as a younger woman, I think it's the more women you have of different ages

as your friends the better, (the concept of a network didn't exist when I was growing up). And the other thing I would tell my younger self is don't marry your own glass ceiling - be with a partner who is not diminished by your self-worth or success.

"Directness in language is important - and there are two words that women, in my opinion should use a lot less and that's 'just' and 'only'. If someone tells you that you have done a good job, or made a difference to them don't go 'I was only doing the usual' or 'I was just part of the team', own it, say thank you and do a happy dance in your head - it's what Emmeline would have wanted!"

Emma Richman



Sam McCabe



Ellen Campbell



Hannah Johal



Congratulations Ellen and Hannah!

After much deliberation, the judges awarded the 2025 national prize to Ellen Campbell, studying Architectural Technology part-time at Leeds Beckett University, while working as a trainee Architectural Technologist with Align Property Partners in North Yorkshire. The judges described the depth and breadth of Ellen's industry knowledge as outstanding, covering everything from lack of resource to population growth, in her well-considered answers. In response to the judges' 'ice breaker' question "Name one person you'd like to have a conversation with over dinner, and say why", Ellen named comedian

Sarah Millican, whom she said is her inspiration – a woman who stays vigilant, is honest, truthful and humble, but is able to hold a room. Ellen commented that she herself has gone "from nothing", to being able to lead meetings, mainly full of men. As for the property and construction industry, she urges that it needs to attract diverse talent, retain diverse talent, and change culture at the top.

Such was the quality of the candidates the judges decided to also present a Highly Commended Award. This went to Urban Planning and Real Estate

student, Hannah Johal, studying at the Bartlett School of Planning, University College London.

Women in Property National Chair, Emma Richman said, "As judges, we get almost as much from this process as the students do. They are genuinely inspiring and a reminder of how much we can learn from the next generation entering our industry. They challenge the status quo, bring fresh ideas and, without exception, a real sense of responsibility and stewardship for the sustainability of our built and natural environment. My congratulations go to all of them but particularly Ellen, our 2025 winner."



Strategic Thinking

In September we held our third Strategy Day. Attended by the National teams and, this year, five of our Limited Board Directors, this was an opportunity to review our WiP Futures Five Year Plan, scrutinise our targets and look at initiatives afresh. It is a truly valuable exercise and a great reminder of all the amazing work undertaken across our network.

At the top of the agenda was **Membership**, which encompassed a range of discussion points including business support for EDI, return on members' investment, male allies, NextGen and growing the WiP membership through supporting student networks.

We moved on to discussing the long-standing relationships nurtured through **Mentoring**, and the resulting business development benefits for both individuals and employers, as mentees

grow personally and professionally. A new area which we plan to explore further is our **Social Impact**. We know we deliver a diverse range of initiatives to a very high standard, from our Outreach work to the depth and breadth of events we run, our Mentoring programme, to the partnerships with different organisations across the UK. We will now look at a metric to measure all this.

We discussed the recently formed **Future Industry Task Group**, a team of members representing Women in Property's seven branches who are looking at the options and potential for a programme to replace the very successful National Student Awards, now in their 20th year. While our membership is women, our remit is about inclusion in its widest sense – so gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, people with a disability, social background. And this is at the

heart of where we plan to go with a new programme. The aim is to encourage more people from different backgrounds, to enter the industry. We are still at a very early stage, starting with a blank canvas, but are looking forward to reporting back over the next eighteen months, as plans develop.

Finally, we looked ahead to future **People-Innovation-Place Summits**, the first of which was launched in Edinburgh last November, to then run every eighteen months. The next #PIPbyWiP will be hosted by the North West branch in April 2026 but we now need to secure the next two locations, for November 2027 and April 2029.

And what a year 2027 will be, when we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Women in Property! More plans in the pipeline!



Put it in your diary! The People-Innovation-Place Summit 2026



People
Innovation
Place
Summit
Hosted by
Women in Property



The next People-Innovation-Place Summit #PIPbyWiP will take place at the Lowry Hotel, Salford on 23rd April 2026. We will be exploring the theme 'Inspiring Innovation' and, once again, will be bringing you engaging speakers from the built environment sector and beyond, with panel discussions to get you thinking outside the box and workshops that will challenge and enlighten you. And, of course, there will be lots of opportunity to network, meet old friends and make new contacts.

- Break-out sessions will include inspiring innovation in teams, and a Design Charrett.
- Discover hidden Manchester on a walking tour with Invisible Cities.
- Fringe events offer something for everyone, from Sip and Paint to Rum Tasting, NextGen to Run Club, and exclusive site tours.

Here's a taster:

- Speakers will explore smart cities and sci-tech, designing cities and innovation, and future generations

So much great content, this event is not to be missed! Details will be published on our website soon, and tickets can be booked via the Women in Property [events](#) page.



An important read – 'Leading with Trust', the Building Balance report

Building Balance originated as a survey, through the South West branch. Written by committee member Helen James, it originally set out to explore the impact of the cost and (lack of) availability of childcare on people, predominantly women, working in the property and construction industry.

shift. It is not just about childcare, and it is not just a 'women's issue, this is everyone's issue."

Rewinding to the start of this year, we held a number of events to discuss and debate the issues arising from the [survey results](#).

"It is about flexibility, transparency and teamwork for all"

What became clear very quickly and as we state in the report, the issues arising from the survey results are as much "about flexibility, transparency and teamwork for all.. This story applies to everyone, across teams, across organisations and represents what needs to become a clear cultural and societal

The 'Leading with Trust' report collates the feedback from those events, representing the views of members and non-members of all genders. More events are in the pipeline and we will be updating the report as new feedback emerges.



You are invited to read and share,
by following this [link](#).

Working – and thriving – From Home

Building Balance is all about having an inclusive workplace, retaining and respecting colleagues of all genders and at all stages in their careers. Working from home (WFH) is an important part of this mix so we asked North West NextGen committee member Lily Cassell from REMM, Manchester, for her thoughts.



Do you find it difficult if senior colleagues aren't in the office because they're WFH? Do you feel supported?

As long as senior colleagues are strong leaders and effective communicators, WFH doesn't impact how supported I feel. However, if someone lacks clear communication or resorts to micromanagement due to not being in person, it can become a disadvantage. Equally, simply being in the office doesn't automatically equate to feeling supported – it comes down to good communication, a supportive attitude, and strong leadership skills, all of which are fully translatable to an online environment.

Do you feel you don't get the "learning through osmosis" if you are working from home, i.e. not picking things up from

colleagues as you go along?

There can be a risk of losing "learning through osmosis" when working from home. However, if a culture of learning and open discussion is encouraged, and office days are used intentionally for knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and mentoring, this can be balanced effectively. WFH days can then provide deeper focus time. The key is for companies to prioritise structured learning and mentorship opportunities, so newer entrants don't miss out.

Do senior colleagues/employers have initiatives in place to help combat this? If so, what?

Mentorship programmes, regular 1:1s, weekly team calls, and dedicated time for learning and development are all

really valuable initiatives to ensure junior colleagues feel supported in a hybrid environment. These practices not only build knowledge and confidence but also create a healthy balance between professional development, work culture, and well-being.

Do you like WFH? What's your ideal balance?

A hybrid WFH policy is ideal – it provides the benefits of office collaboration while also allowing for a healthier work-life balance. Working from home can give space for hobbies, exercise, pet care, childcare, and general well-being, while also reducing travel time and costs, which is especially important in the current cost-of-living climate. The optimal balance would be 2–3 days in the office each week within a supportive culture that prioritises communication and leadership.

The rise and rise of NextGen

Women in Property has two vibrant NextGen groups, in the North West and South East. Their aim is to support, empower and connect people at the beginning of their careers in property and construction and give them a voice to ensure their perspectives are heard.

North West NextGen leaders Emily Dixon and Jaime Stanton have embraced the opportunity to grow the group over the last two years, now with four new committee members. Their events consistently get great feedback from attendees who benefit from the inclusive, friendly and low-pressure environments – it's a great setting to ask questions, learn and network, alongside other people at a similar experience level.

"WiP NextGen provides an environment for young people to network and make the early friends and connections that support the growth of our future industry leaders," said Emily.

"Women in Property is a great place to build a long-term support network,

providing an inclusive, welcoming, low-pressure environment, as well as offering opportunities you might not normally get – our site visits and topical talks with insights from industry leaders are all really popular."

This year, NextGen events have included Yoga Breakfasts, 'Paint and Sip', Meet the Committee and site tours of Manchester's new innovation district, Sister, and apartment scheme, Kampus. Coming up for the festive season, they've got Wreathmaking with Porcelanosa.

Grace Owen-Ellis, Chair of the South East NextGen Committee, is equally enthusiastic and with her five fellow committee members, has organised a diverse range of events. These include

a Pride Breakfast in celebration of the LGBTQIA+ community, networking drinks and a Morning Yin Yoga session. Women in Property creates opportunities for members at all stages in their careers, a great example being the provision of free tickets for UKREiF, which Grace attended in May, representing the South East branch, while Lily Cassell represented the North West.

NextGen is good news for potential employers too, as North West co-Chair Jaime explained, "Anyone looking to attract new talent and build their teams will find the most engaged and ambitious cohort of graduates, apprentices and young people. You can grow your organisation, creating a diverse workforce which represents the values of younger generations."

Interested in establishing a NextGen group in your branch? Just get in touch with your Branch Chair who will help set the wheels in motion.



Partnership update:

WiP and NAWIC at UK Construction Week

A first for Women in Property when we collaborated with NAWIC, the National Association of Women in Construction, at UK Construction Week at the NEC. We co-hosted a stand, perfectly located right next to the Culture and Skills Hub, where visitors were able to find out more about what each of our organisations does, and how we do it. It was really rewarding to partner with a group that shares the same ethos and aspirations as our own. Members of our

Midlands committee took time out to cover the stand across the three-day event and gave very enthusiastic feedback.

Katie Gregory, of Lambert Smith Hampton said "It was worth every minute in my opinion. A couple of the ladies actually came over because another stand had recommended us to her... that says a lot to me!" while Anne-Marie Eden of Scanlans commented "For some, it was males going back to their businesses and sharing the info with their female colleagues. If we now have more people talking about WiP who didn't know us before – that's a job well done."

Our thanks to our friends at UKCW for their hospitality, Midlands Chair Kezia Smart, of BNP Paribas Real Estate, for coordinating and to Midlands members Janet Rowley (Vice Chair), Sophie Smith, Katie Gregory, Anne-Marie Eden and Kay Venables for their help. Huge thanks too to Steph Cox (North West Chair), who joined the team to support.

It wasn't just about the stand though. National Chair, Emma Richman and National Vice Chair, Sam McCabe both participated in panels over the course of the event. In particular, Sam joined a lively debate on the 'Women who shape construction' panel, which was followed by networking, all hosted by UKCW.



Visit London Build Expo

London Build 2025 returns to Olympia's Grand and National Halls on November 19th and 20th to celebrate 10 years of connecting the construction industry and once again, Women in Property is delighted to be an event partner.

As the UK's leading and largest construction show, London Build attracts over 38,000 attendees, 750+ speakers across 12 CPD stages, and 450+ exhibitors.



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Saint-Gobain Group | Sherwin-Williams
Skanska | Southern Renewals
Enterprise/VolkerFitzpatrick | Technal
Toyota | Volker Wessels | Wates Group.

Women in Property speakers:

National Vice Chair Sam McCabe
will be speaking on four panels:

Sustainability v Affordability:

Can developers have both? (19th at 11am)

Addressing the Gender Pay Gap
in UK Architecture (20th at 11am)

Beyond Hiring: Creating an inclusive
culture that retains talent (20th at 2pm)

The greenest building is the one
that already exists (20th at 4pm)

Former National Chair
Chithra Marsh will join a panel
discussing 'Creating pathways
to leadership for diverse talent
in UK Architecture' (19th at 1pm)

Details:

- Dates: 19th November
(9:30 am – 4:30 pm)
& 20th November
(9:30 am – 5:00 pm)
- Venue: Olympia
(Grand & National Halls),
Hammersmith Rd,
London W14 8UX
- Register: [visitlondonbuildexpo.com](https://www.visitlondonbuildexpo.com) to
receive your free attendee pass and
- Explore the full [event programme](#).

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Branch News



The **Liverpool** Hub hosted a networking golf afternoon in partnership with BOLD B2B at Formby Hall Golf Resort & Spa, where guests enjoyed coaching sessions and demonstrations from top PGA professionals.



Midlands

The Midlands branch held its regular monthly Book Club in person, for the first time in over a year. Usually hosted on Teams, they decided to

get together for the September session, to catch up on the recent read, as well as put some faces to names usually seen on screen. The turnout was great, with everyone taking part in a valuable and insightful discussion around the complicated book, "My Dark Vanessa" by Kate Elizabeth Russell.



In conjunction with the UK & Ireland Passivhaus Conference 2025, the **Northern Ireland** Hub hosted a dynamic panel discussion on "What's Stopping Passive House

Becoming Mainstream?" After breakfast and networking the panel explored the challenges holding back wider adoption of this gold standard in energy-efficient building. Thanks to speakers Sam McCabe who, as well as being WiP National Vice Chair, is Passive House Lead UK and Sustainable Buildings Lead, Scotland at WSP, Ann-Marie Fallon, technical advisor with the Passivhaus Trust and an Associate Director at Architype and Andrew Cunningham, Head of Estates Development Services for the Southern Health & Social Care Trust. A special thanks goes to Wilson Nesbitt for kindly sponsoring.



The **Northern Scotland** Hub is growing in Dundee and across the Tayside region. An inaugural Netwalk in Dundee took in the progress made

in the Waterfront regeneration, starting at Janetta's Gellateria in Slessor Gardens, passing under the V&A Dundee and along the waterfront. Also in Dundee, the Hub held a wellness event Confident You: Everyday Tools for Inner Strength hosted by Blackadders LLP, with Nicola Barclay of Athena Coaching, a former WIP Scotland Board member who has previously run similar sessions in Aberdeen and Edinburgh.



An eagerly anticipated highlight on the region's events calendar, the **North West** Annual Dinner delivered yet another unforgettable night of excitement and

celebration! Held at the iconic Victoria Warehouse, this event continues to grow bigger and better each year. Guests danced the night away, enthralled by electrifying performances from the MadHen Band and the incredible DJ Sammy Dean. It was truly a night to remember!



Members from the **South East** branch enjoyed the annual outing to Property Race Day at Ascot. The sun shone, they feasted on a fabulous lunch and

cocktails at a nearby restaurant, and then headed to the racecourse for an exciting afternoon of racing, viewed from the King Edward VII enclosure.



The **South West** branch has been on the move this summer, with its Sweatworking, Netwalking and Spotlight series all encouraging networking and learning on the go.

Recent events have included the newly established Run Club, the Heat Netwalking series, an LGBTQ+ walking history tour plus numerous development showcases and CPDs.



Thames Valley Hub enjoyed a lovely summer evening on the River Thames in Oxford in July.

40 members and non-members boarded the steamer at Folly Bridge in Oxford and relaxed with a few drinks and buffet whilst travelling through the beautiful Oxfordshire countryside meeting new contacts and reconnecting with existing friends. The event was kindly sponsored by Carter Jonas, Glanville Consulting, Blake Morgan and Groundsure.

Success Stories:

Women's Network of the Year

Fantastic news for Women in Property Scotland, which was recently named 'Women's Network of the Year' at the Inspiring Women in Construction and Engineering Awards, held at the Royal Lancaster London.

Branch Chair Laura McGuigan said "Being recognised at a national level for our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is truly humbling and bringing this award home to Scotland makes it all the more meaningful! This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our incredible committee of volunteers, the steadfast support of our sponsors, and everyone who champions our mission across Scotland."



L to R Jennifer Winyard, Candice Blackwood and Martha Penney

Four of our members shone in the Property Week Inspiring Women in Property Awards 2025. Former National Chair, Jennifer Winyard of Barratt Homes, won EDI Champion of the Year – Residential, while former Chair of the Limited Board, Candice Blackwood of CMS, won Woman of the Year – Financial and Professional Services. Dr Catalina Ionita of Chapman Taylor, and Martha Penney of Barratt Homes and a former National Student Awards national finalist, were both nominated for Awards. Congratulations all!

Congratulations to more amazing members who are flying high!



Shona Boyd has joined Graham & Sibbald as Senior Surveyor



Helen James of JLL was nominated Property Personality of the Year in the Insider South West Property Awards 2025.



Catherine McKeown has joined CHAP Group, Aberdeen as Business Development Manager



Danielle Pearce has been promoted to Associate (Operations & Growth) at Saffer Cooper



Elisabeth Pywell has joined Nexus Planning as Associate Director specialising in planning and regeneration.



Kezia Smart has been nominated Ambassador of the Year in the RICS Matrics Surveyor Awards 2025



Jennifer Williams has been promoted to Associate Director at Fulkers Bailey Russell

Shout out for new Mentors

We are always on the lookout for Mentors to join our highly acclaimed cross-discipline [Mentoring programme](#), which is free to members. If you are interested in becoming a Mentor you can [register your interest here](#). Whether you have been a Mentor before or not, we require all Mentors and Mentees to attend an online training session, so they understand how our programme works, enabling everyone involved to get the most out of the mentoring partnership.