



# PROPERTY BYTES

JANUARY 2010

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## IAVI CONFERENCE AND PRESIDENT'S LUNCH



Dr Alan Ahearne, Colm McCarthy, IAVI President Aine Myler and Aidan O'Hogan

The Conference and President's Lunch held in the Burlington Hotel last Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January attracted almost 460 for the lunch, with almost 400 also in attendance for the conference session. Normally, the President's Lunch is held in October but it was postponed and merged with the Conference and this, along with a very high profile team of speakers, proved a big draw for members. The event was very competitively priced to reflect the difficult times that members are experiencing. The Institute is grateful to Independent News and Media and Globrix for their generous sponsorship of the event.

The topic for the first session was the Property Services Regulatory Authority and the speakers were Imelda Reynolds, IAVI Law Agent, Beauchamps Solicitors; Tom Lynch, Chief Executive Designate, PSRA and Roland O'Connell, IAVI Second Vice President. The issues dealt with included licensing; the role and function of the PSRA; complaints, investigations and sanctions; compensation fund and consumer interests.

The second session brought together Dr. Alan Ahearne, special advisor to the Minister for Finance, Colm McCarthy, the economist who, during 2009, was chairman of An Bord Snip and Aidan O'Hogan, past president of IAVI and former MD and Chairman of Savills. Dr. Ahearne addressed delegates on NAMA and the Irish banking system while Colm McCarthy dealt with the banking crisis and economic recovery. Aidan O'Hogan provided details of the effects on the property market across all sectors. The speakers outlined the possibility of economic recovery based on certain prevailing conditions but no significant growth is expected until 2011/2012.

The morning came to a close with a Members' Forum during which members were invited to ask various National Council panel members questions relating to the future of the business and the IAVI after the economic downturn. There was considerable media interest in the Conference with reports on RTE radio and television and good newspaper coverage.

Following the Conference, delegates were able to relax over lunch and enjoy a very entertaining talk by Niall Quinn, former Irish international and Chairman of Sunderland FC. Niall commenced by introducing a novel display of dexterity with a football by 19 year old Mark Tiernan and went on to hold the attention of the audience for the best part of an hour with stories about some well known soccer personalities. He remained talking to delegates long after the lunch had ended and was obviously held in very high esteem.

## IAVI Conference & President's Lunch 2010



Maria Kyne (left), Head of the School of the Built Environment, Limerick Institute of Technology and Clodagh Daly, Clodagh Daly Auctioneers



left to right: Paul Hanly, HT Meagher O'Reilly; Kevin Sweeney and Marcus Wren, Bannon



Aine Myler and Niall photographed with Marie McDonald, winner of the Owen O'Riordan medal and Shane Flanagan, DNG Flanagan Ford



Paddy Quinn, Quinn Bros, poses a question



Delegates at the IAVI Annual Conference



IAVI President Aine Myler photographed with Sunderland Chairman Niall Quinn

## REMINDER – GROUP PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE SCHEME

JC Collins, the IAVI Insurance Brokers, administer a Group Professional Indemnity Insurance Scheme for Member Firms. It would be well worth your while asking for a quote from JC Collins as members have recently been pleasantly surprised at the considerable savings on their premiums, following a change of underwriter while, of course, maintaining the very high standard of policy offered. Contact Dave Fitzgerald or Karen Deacon on 01 2780522 to obtain a very competitive rate.

## NEW HIBERNIAN AVIVA GROUP SCHEME FOR IAVI MEMBERS

With the ever increasing costs of private health insurance a huge burden for everyone it makes sense to shop around for the best cover at a competitive cost. A group scheme has been in existence with VHI for a number of years but we can now offer a similar scheme through Hibernian Aviva. At the moment Hibernian Aviva are heavily promoting a savings offer, valid until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2010 only. By switching to Aviva, you can save up to €120\* per adult/€415\* per family. **The added incentive for IAVI members is that the standard 26 week waiting period will be waived** if you choose to sign up within four weeks from the date of issue of this ezine. If you are not in a position to avail of the offer by 31<sup>st</sup> January the normal 10% group scheme discount will apply thereafter.

To obtain more information click here <http://www.avivahealth.ie/promotion/?CMP=KNC-HealthPPC&gclid=CPfl5s6RpJ8CFSeEIAodPQIgLg>

Or contact John Power at Power Life and Pension by email—[John.Power@powerlifeandpensions.com](mailto:John.Power@powerlifeandpensions.com)



\*These savings are based on a family of 2 adults, 2 children and 1 student switching from VHI Plan B Option Parents & Kids for Aviva Level 2 Hospital.

## FEBRUARY CPD SEMINARS

**Topic:** **BREAKFAST BRIEFING - IAVI 2009 PROPERTY SURVEY**

**Date:** Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February (Registration at 7.45am Seminar commences at 8.00am sharp)

**Venue:** IAVI, 38 Merrion Square, Dublin 2

**Fee:** Free of charge to members. Non-members €50.

**CPD Hours:** 1½ (Category A)

**Speaker:** Geoff Tucker BA MA *Independent economic research consultant*

- Views from the frontline ... overview of the performance of the residential and commercial property markets in 2009 based on the results of the qualitative and quantitative survey analysis
- In search of green shoots ... how IAVI members see the outlook for the property market in 2010 and where the future growth opportunities lie for the industry in the years ahead

**Topic:** **PROPERTY MARKETING AND MARKETING YOUR OWN COMPANY**

**Date:** Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February (Registration at 5.30 Seminar commences at 6.00pm sharp)

**Venue:** IAVI, 38 Merrion Square, Dublin 2

**Fee:** Free of charge to members. Non-members €50.

**CPD Hours:** 1½ (Category A)

**Speakers:** Patrick Stephenson, Managing Partner, Boys and Girls (Advertising Agency)

Conor O'Donovan, Communications Officer, IAVI

- The benefit of Integrated Marketing Communications
- Digital (the internet and social media) – the benefits and the pitfalls
- Marketing and maximising your sales potential & Online communications channels for the agent (newsletters, blogs, video and social media channels) – International examples and IAVI channels

# CPD Categories Reminder

As previously advised, the current CPD Cycle ends on **31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**. That means that members will not be required to have the required 60 hours CPD completed until that date. Those who used hours completed in 2007 to assist them 'across the line' for the 2004-6 period may not use those hours towards 2008-10 but those who have hours recorded for 2007 and who have not used them for that purpose may use them towards their total for the current cycle. The number of hours automatically allocated for 'professional reading' increased from five to ten. Following the end of the cycle, members' cards will be checked at random, with those who were found to have breached the rules of conduct in the current period among the first to be called in.

**The CPD cycle is a three year one. The current cycle runs from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2010.**

**The minimum and maximum hours for each CPD category** for any three year period for all members other than those who reach 65 years of age on or before 31<sup>st</sup> December in the final year of the three year period or who are deemed compliant because of their occupation, (e.g. full-time college lecturers) are shown in the table below.

CPD Categories	Min. hours	Max. hours
<b>A</b> Attendance at property-related conferences and seminars organised by the IAVI or a similar professional body or conference organiser. (+ travel time of <b>one</b> hour if office is <b>over</b> 25 miles from the venue and <b>two</b> hours if <b>over</b> 50 miles).	15	50
<b>B</b> Property related educational courses <sup>1</sup>	0	50
<b>C</b> Time spent preparing <b>new</b> published technical article or seminar material.	0	25
<b>D</b> Relevant in-house training courses.	0	25
<b>E</b> Relevant organisational meetings <sup>2</sup> . (Travel time not allowed).	0	15
<b>F</b> Professional reading	10	10
<b>G</b> Private viewing of named property related videos, DVDs, TV Documentaries etc.	0	20
<b>H</b> Work-based practical learning <sup>3</sup>	0	20

<sup>1</sup>**Property-related courses** are relevant property courses leading to the award of a third level Certificate, (level 6), Diploma or 'Ordinary Degree', (level 7), Honours Degree, (level 8), Master's Degree, (level 9), or Doctorate, (level 10). Also short refresher courses run by professional bodies and others on property and related issues such as valuations, law, planning, tax and finance.

<sup>2</sup>**Relevant organisational meetings** are those of professional bodies in the property sector, (Committees, Councils, Task Forces) and organisational meetings, which are property related, conducted by other bodies such as Chambers of Commerce, Government or Local Authority forums. Working as a tutor or supervisor on an IAVI approved academic course is also included.

<sup>3</sup>**Work-based practical learning** comprises all relevant practical work which an individual can clearly demonstrate has broadened his or her professional expertise. In addition, commencing one's own practice for the first time earns the principal or principals 20 hours CPD each, while a one office firm opening a second office earns one principal or employee member 10 hours of CPD. Changing a trading entity, eg from a sole trader to partnership or vice-versa, earns the principals 10 hours of CPD.

# CEPI News

## The Recast of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)

A compromise has been agreed between the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers on the form of the recast of the EPBD. This will need final approval by the Council and the European Parliament which is likely at the beginning of 2010, after which Member States will have two years in which to implement its terms in national legislation. Important points include:



- The compromise introduces the concept of "**nearly zero**" energy buildings (or buildings with a very high energy performance).
- All buildings built after **31 December 2020** must have high energy-saving standards and be powered to a large extent by renewable energy.
- By the end of 2018 the **public sector** must own or rent only buildings with high energy-saving standards and promote the conversion of existing buildings to "nearly zero" standards.
- Member States must draw up **national plans** for increasing the number of nearly zero buildings, and, by mid-2011 make a list of financial and other incentives for the transition (technical assistance, subsidies, loan schemes and low interest loans).
- Existing buildings will have to improve their energy performance after **major renovations** (if technically, functionally and economically feasible). Member States must encourage owners to install smart meters and replace existing heating, hot-water plumbing and air-conditioning with high-efficiency alternatives such as heat pumps or renewable based systems.
- Member States will have to establish a **certification system** to measure the energy performance of buildings. Energy performance certificates will be required for any buildings constructed, sold or rented out to a new tenant, and for buildings where over 500m<sup>2</sup> (reducing to 250m<sup>2</sup> after five years) will be occupied by a public authority and frequently visited by the public.
- **Energy performance certificates** will have to provide recommendations for improvement and may also include additional information such as annual energy consumption and percentage of renewable energy in total energy consumption.
- By 2011 the European Commission should develop a voluntary common **European certification scheme** for the energy performance of non-residential buildings.

There are **exemptions** from the directive's requirements for: small houses (with a floor area of less than 50m<sup>2</sup>), holiday homes used for less than four months a year (or that use less than 25% of all-year energy consumption), buildings for religious activities, temporary buildings used for two years or less, industrial sites, workshops and agricultural buildings with low energy demand and protected historic buildings where an energy-efficiency measure would "unacceptably alter their character or appearance".

## Globrix.ie

Globrix.ie is working with auctioneers and estate agents across the county to reduce their spend on traditional portals by driving FREE traffic direct to their websites. After all, you've invested in your website, why not show it off?

### What agents have been asking for! We've been listening to you!

#### You asked for.

#### We bring you.

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[www.globrix.ie/agents](http://www.globrix.ie/agents)



# Personal Safety—Lone Working

Some of you will remember the case of Suzy Lamplugh, the estate agent who disappeared in 1986 while showing a client round a house in Fulham, London and who has never been found. As we are now in the depths of the dark evenings, although personal safety is applicable at any time of the year, we thought it timely to provide the following general guidelines which have been extracted from a booklet published by the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) in England. The extract is published with their kind permission. An e-learning programme on safety for estate agents is available from the NAEA. For more information please contact [courses@nfopp.co.uk](mailto:courses@nfopp.co.uk).

There are many sophisticated electronic safety systems for lone workers but in the absence of an electronic system there are a few basic commonsense rules that can help avoid a nasty situation.

## Working alone away from base

Working in estate agency, whether it is sales, lettings or commercial, the negotiator is required to visit properties either to meet an owner in order to carry out a market valuation or to take a prospective purchaser around a property on a viewing.

There are other situations that involve working alone away from base. These could be measuring up an empty property or building, carrying out property visits on managed rented properties, conducting a check in or check out, compiling an inventory or assessing a rent review on a commercial premises. Depending on the circumstances the negotiator could be out of the office, on occasions for considerable periods of time. It is therefore essential that there is a process in place to ensure that others know the whereabouts of the negotiator, how they may be contacted and the identity of the client or customer. Are you aware of your company policy with regard to letting someone know where you are, what you are doing and if your plans change?

### In the office:-

- Obtain as many contact details as possible of the prospective purchaser or potential client – make sure you have a landline number
  - Emphasise that this information is required as part of your company's safety policy
  - Confirm all appointments by calling the landline to ensure it is authentic
  - Enter all appointments; name and contact details of client; time of appointments and expected time of return to the office in the central office diary system
  - If out of the office for the majority of the day a "tracing system" should be put in place. A system should also be in place as to the frequency of checking in during the day and to whom.
  - The office or company should have a distress code in place. This is a pre-arranged word or sentence that signals to the person contacted that there is an emergency situation or that you need assistance. Everyone in the office should be aware of the distress code.
  - The office should be aware of the car you are using – records should be kept of the make, model, colour and registration of the car
- Personal contact details, photo, next of kin contact details should also be held on file

### On the appointment:-

- Give some thought in advance to what exit strategies to use if you feel threatened. For instance, you could say "I have left some paperwork I need in the car"
- Conduct your own "Dynamic Risk Assessment" on the doorstep before you enter. If you feel uncomfortable make an excuse and leave. Trust your instincts.
- Do not enter the premises unless the person you expect to meet is there.
- Take note of your surroundings and possible exits
- When conducting viewings if you are meeting the prospective purchaser outside the property take time to assess them and the situation. If you feel uncomfortable then make an excuse and say that you will have to re-schedule the appointment. Trust your instincts and act on them
- If more people than expected turn up for a viewing be aware. Do not feel obliged to proceed.
- Never allow people to wander around a property on their own.
- When entering a room allow the person to enter the room first, in this way you are keeping yourself between them and the exit.
- Ensure that you know how to open the front door quickly if necessary. It is not wise to leave the front door open as others may then be able to enter the property.
- Make sure that you are the last person to leave the property and that the property is securely locked behind you.
- When visiting an empty property check beforehand if anyone is likely to be at the premises; always knock before entering and allow time for someone to come to the door even if you are not expecting anyone to be there. Check identity if someone is on the premises, then alert the office and give them the name of the person concerned. Alternatively, leave and make a further appointment.
- Ensure that you close the front door properly behind you to prevent someone following you into the property.
- There should be a strict procedure regarding safety for appointments carried out at the end of the day where no-one is likely to be in the office on your return, or appointments carried out on your way home.
- It is essential that you communicate to another staff member either by call or text to confirm that you have safely completed your last appointment. If no system is in place, it could be a very long time before anyone raises the alarm if something untoward has happened.— **Remember to PLAN – Prepare Look Confident Avoid Risk Never assume it won't happen to you.**