

# SURVEYORS

# JOURNAL

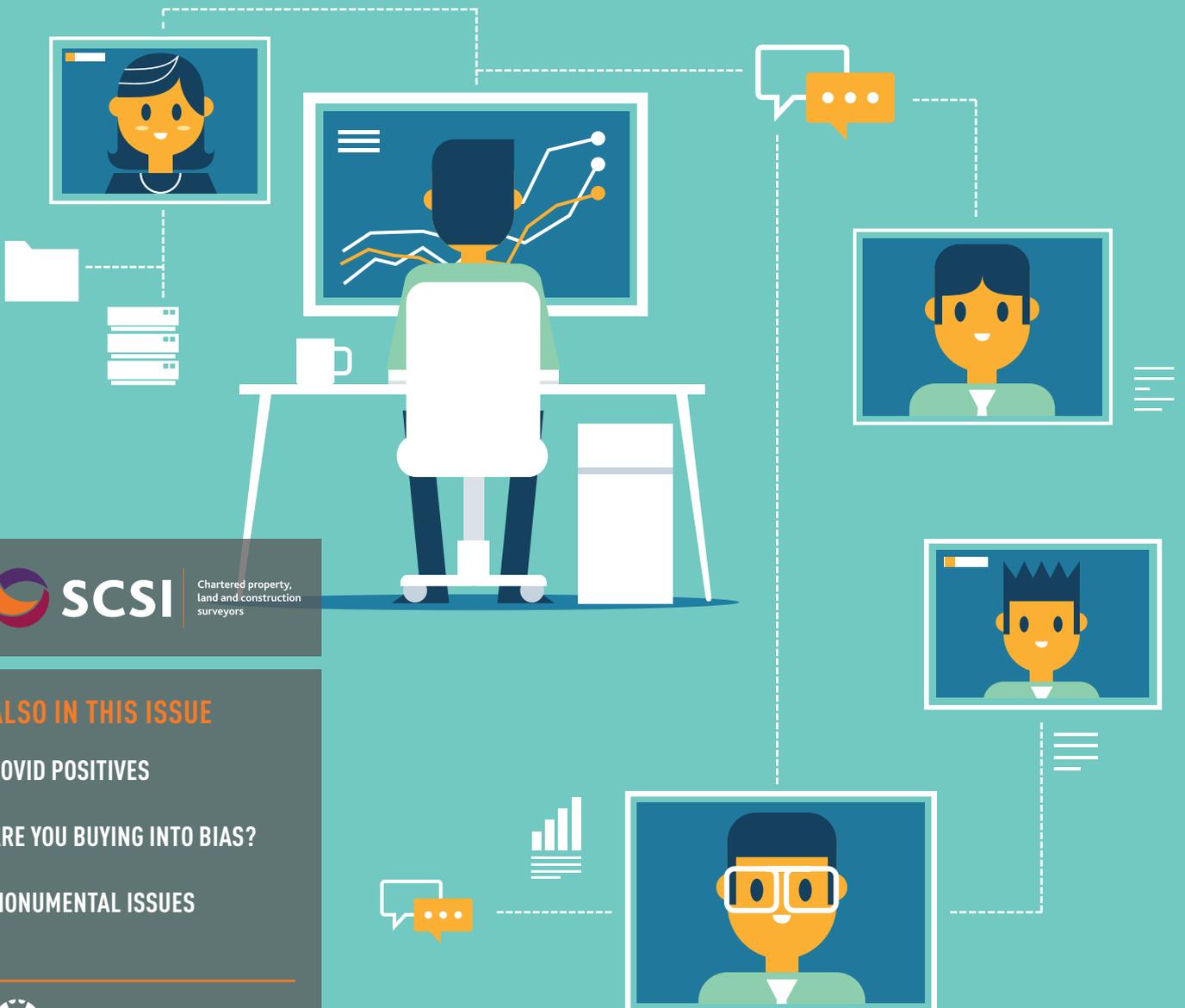
VOLUME 11

ISSUE 2

SUMMER

2021

## REMOTE BUT NOT ALONE



### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

COVID POSITIVES

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MONUMENTAL ISSUES





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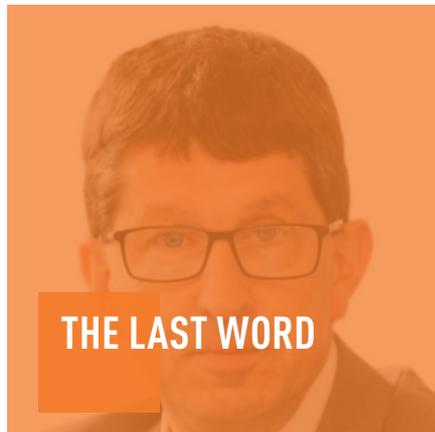
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# CONTENTS

- President's message 4
- Editorial 5
- Business news 6
- Society news 7
- A flood of tasks 12
- Four ways to use the refreshed SCSI logo 16
- Covid positives 18
- The MUD Act at 10 22
- Remote but not alone 24
- Monumental issues 26
- Are you buying into bias? 28
- Don't let the fund sink 30
- Committee remodelling 33
- The last word 34

Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland,  
38 Merrion Square,  
Dublin 2.

Tel: 01-644 5500  
Email: info@scsi.ie  
Web: www.scsi.ie

[www.scsi.ie](http://www.scsi.ie)

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## PUBLISHERS

Published on behalf of the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland by Think Media

<b>Editorial:</b>	Ann-Marie Hardiman
	Paul O'Grady
	Colm Quinn
<b>Design:</b>	Tony Byrne
	Tom Cullen
	Ruth Woulfe
<b>Advertising:</b>	Paul O'Grady

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# REPRESENTING, SUPPORTING, CONNECTING AND INFLUENCING

NEW SCSi PRESIDENT T.J. CRONIN OUTLINES HIS AIMS FOR THE COMING YEAR.

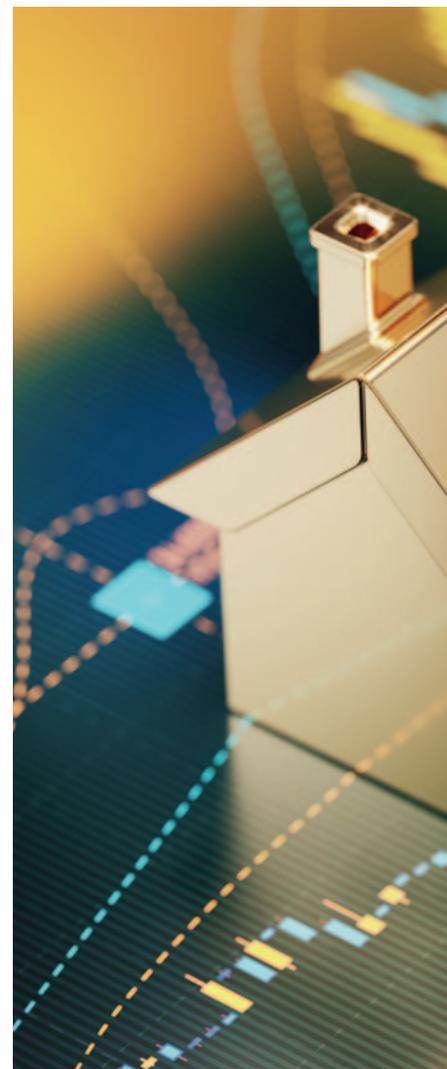
I am truly honoured and delighted to be elected as President of the SCSi. I want to assure you that I will undertake the role with dedication and commitment, and represent you to the best of my ability. During my term as President, there are a number of key objectives that I wish to focus on. The first is to oversee the implementation of 'Roadmap 2024', our new Strategic Plan, which sets out the organisation's aims and objectives over the next three years. Roadmap 2024 is structured on four pillars: Representing; Supporting; Connecting; and, Influencing, and I honestly believe the plan will result in an improved member offering from the SCSi. Second, this year marks the 10th anniversary of the formation of the SCSi, following the merger of the SCS and IAVI. I believe there remain elements to be addressed that we committed to delivering at the time of the merger. The recent brand refresh with new member logos highlights the broad membership that the SCSi represents to the public, including auctioneers, rural valuers and agents, etc. Additionally, we will be examining the routes to membership.

My third priority is the housing crisis. Obviously, there is no short, swift solution. However, with SCSi members' expertise in property, land and construction, we can provide credible, evidence-based commentary on all sectors of the built environment. Instead of 'Location, Location, Location', the industry says 'Supply, Supply, Supply' – supply of zoned and serviced development land; supply of affordable and viable housing; and, supply of a competitive financial/mortgage market.

Fourth, we need to lead on a sustainable future – personally, professionally, locally, nationally, and internationally. The SCSi has already stated that its "aim is to strive to promote sustainability and follow sustainable business practices in our day-to-day operations, encouraging and supporting our members to instil these practices in their own business". I strongly urge members to read the SCSi Sustainability Policy and sign up to Surveyors Declare.

Lastly, I want to thank all of the over 400 volunteers who rolled up their sleeves in the past 18 months to help the SCSi while managing changes in their personal and professional lives. I believe the ability and agility of the SCSi – member volunteerism. It has never been easier to become involved and contribute to the work of the SCSi. Involvement in the regional committees or Professional Groups is a great way to involve yourself, but you can contribute in many other ways. Just get in touch with a member of the SCSi team or with me.

I look forward to representing you in my term as President. I am eager to meet as many of you as is possible once it is safe to do so.



## ROADMAP 2024

The SCSi's new Strategic Plan sets out the organisation's aims and objectives for the next three years.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

T.J. Cronin  
President



# A DECADE OF CHANGE

ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MERGER OF THE SCS AND IAVI TO FORM THE SCSI IT IS FITTING TO REFLECT ON WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED.

**A**t about a quarter of a normal professional working life, 10 years is a long time. For many surveyors, the ten years that have elapsed since the merger of the SCS and the IAVI, and the formation of the SCSi, may seem quite short, but they were truly eventful. Those ten years have seen profound changes, including to professional life, as the economy responded to the financial crisis, the unrelenting advance of IT and, more recently, the trials of Covid. During this time the Society has certainly done a lot of good work and has established itself firmly as a leading professional body in Ireland. It has made its mark, surely justifying that merger. Its contribution to national discussions is often acknowledged in the media and a good example of this is the frequent references to the construction cost studies in commentary on addressing the housing crisis. By way of contributions such as this, the Society has certainly made a significant input to this crisis, certainly one of the most important challenges facing the State. All this must reflect well on members, their professional role and their levels of competence.

For a body that represents such a wide range of roles in property, land and construction, strategic direction will always be a challenge, as will maintaining focus for this variety. It is therefore appropriate that the new Strategic Plan for the Society has been adopted and the branding refreshed, as is reported in this edition of the *Surveyors Journal*. The next ten years will also bring challenges, and professional life will change, perhaps in many unpredictable ways. After ten years, however, the Society is in good shape and has a clear direction of travel to support members, their clients and the State.

Some of these changes can be gleaned from the accounts of how surveyors are coping with responses to Covid-19 featured in this edition (page 18). As the contributors note, some of the changes to work practices will endure post Covid and will be retained as they enhance professional service. Also, as Declan Magee points out in his piece (page 24), starting a new job can be daunting at the best of times but this era of remote working presents particular challenges. As Declan says, you may be remote, but you are not alone, and he makes some suggestions that will help.

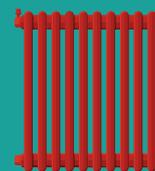
## EDITORIAL

Tom Dunne  
Editor



## A HOT TOPIC!

A quarter of Ireland's energy is used in domestic houses. We use 18.5MWh per home per year.



SPACE HEATING

61%



WATER HEATING

19%



LIGHTING AND APPLIANCES

17%



COOKING

3%

\*Source: SEAI, Energy in the residential sector report, 2018.

## KINGSPAN DONATES €500,000 TO TUD

Kingspan has announced a five-year partnership with Technological University Dublin (TUD) to support the development of the University's Design and Construct Centre. The Centre aims to enhance the competitiveness of Irish construction, engineering and architectural companies in the global marketplace.

The University states that the Centre will offer a collaborative learning experience and capacity building for students from apprenticeship to PhD level, and a testbed for developing innovative and transformative solutions for industry. Work on the development of the facility, including the Kingspan Lab, will begin in Q3 of 2021.

Kingspan's Group Head of Innovation, Mike Stenson, said: "Being able to partner with the University gives Kingspan the unrivalled opportunity to work with TU Dublin students collaboratively during the course of their studies. This learning period is the ideal timeframe for Kingspan and the students to build a shared understanding, knowledge and curiosity in innovation, digitalisation and sustainability for a better future-built environment. The partnership and the Kingspan Lab also enable the opportunity to collaborate in extensive research in each of these areas, offering students exciting, future-focused and comprehensive learning opportunities that will benefit TU Dublin, Kingspan and the wider construction sector".

## DUKE MCCAFFREY NEW APPOINTMENT



Iomair Treacey has joined Duke McCaffrey as Senior Cost Manager to work across industry sectors including housing, nursing care, schools, data centres and hotels. He is a quantity surveyor with over 15 years' experience in the industry. He holds a BSc in Construction Economics and is registered with the SCSI. Iomair said: "I am extremely pleased to join the team in DMC. Their core principles and

management approach, as well as the variety of projects they are involved with, are things that appealed to me massively".

The company states that having spent the majority of his career to date working in a family quantity surveying practice, Iomair has built a wide range of experience in the education, housing, retail, commercial and conservation sectors. Joe McCaffrey, Managing Director of Duke McCaffrey, said: "We are delighted to welcome Iomair to the team. During the interview process he showed great talent and his down-to-earth personality will work well with our clients and our team".

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# LAND PRICES TO RISE BY 4% THIS YEAR



Land prices remained resilient last year despite the threat posed by Covid-19, and are predicted to rise by 4% on average this year, underpinned by a rise in farm incomes as well as strong demand and reduced supply. Demand for rented ground also remains strong with rents this year expected to rise by 8% in Leinster, 5% in Munster and 6% in Connacht. However, auctioneers, valuers and Chartered Surveyors operating in the agricultural land markets say that restrictions on viewings due to lockdown led to a

decrease in the volume of sales, as prospective sellers opted to defer their plans to sell. These were some of the key takeaways from the SCSi/Teagasc Agricultural Land Market Review and Outlook Report 2021, which was published recently. The report's findings and commentary by James Lee, Chair of the Rural Agency Group, received extensive media coverage across the *Irish Independent*, *The Irish Times*, RTÉ and online media. Sincere thanks to the 156 members who participated in this year's survey.



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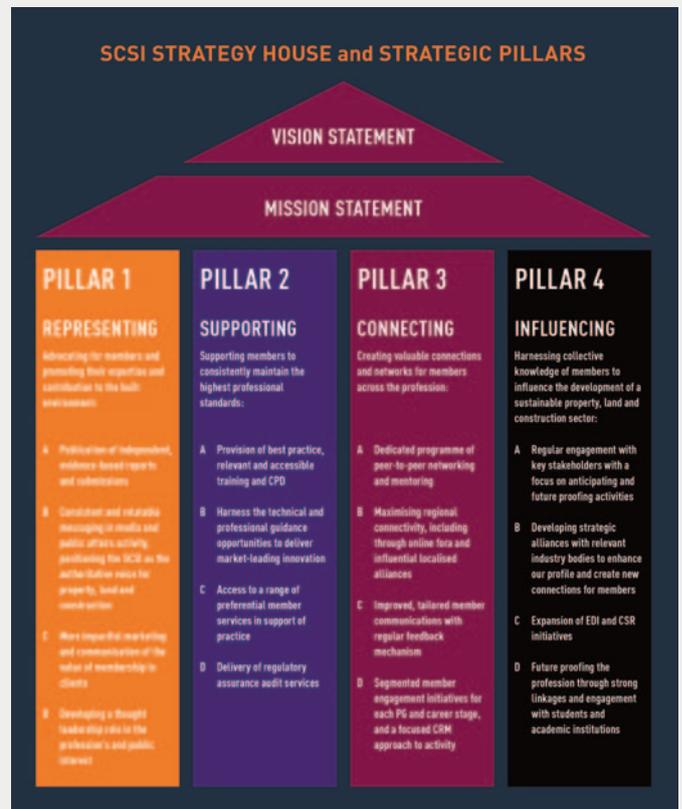
# ROADMAP 2024 – SCSI STRATEGIC PLAN

At the AGM in June, the SCSI officially launched its new three-year strategic plan 'Roadmap 2024', which builds on the strength of the SCSI in harnessing the expertise of its broad membership while also supporting members individually. Through Roadmap 2024, members will see an enhancement of current services while also seeing an increase in the value and relevance of membership through innovation. As part of the process, the SCSI has updated its vision, mission and values to recognise the evolution of the organisation in recent years. These changes better align to the aspirations of the SCSI as it continues to develop.

Following extensive member research, the plan will be delivered across four key pillars: Representing, Supporting, Connecting and Influencing. Each objective will be actioned through in excess of 100 key deliverables. As in surveying, measurement will be critical, and members are encouraged to provide feedback as the SCSI rolls out the plan over the next three years.

The member benchmark survey conducted in February found that, despite the impact of the pandemic, the SCSI saw an increase in its member satisfaction rating from approximately 50% in 2018 to 70% in 2021. Shirley Coulter, SCSI CEO, said: "It's clear that members value the continuous work of the SCSI volunteers and staff, but we cannot rely solely on what got us to this point to bring us to the next stage. We have big aspirations in how Roadmap 2024 can continue the development of the SCSI for the benefit of members and in the public advantage. There is no doubt that the future of the surveying profession is bright".

Aligned with the launch of the new strategic plan, in response to member and wider stakeholder research, was the completion of a branding refresh for the organisation. The refreshed logo modernises the look of the SCSI logo, which turns 10 this year, while also more clearly saying to the public that membership is composed of Chartered Property, Land and Construction Surveyors. Accompanying the refresh, the SCSI has introduced new member logos, which are personalised to our disciplines and levels of membership to ensure greater understanding of who SCSI members are and what they do [see pages 16 and 17 of this edition for



further details). Over 80 logos were designed for members for the launch, but the SCSI has been handling a number of personal requests to capture those with unique service offerings.

Members were encouraged at the launch by the President and CEO to directly engage with Roadmap 2024's implementation through accessing the various new supports and services. Progress and new innovations arising from the Roadmap will be communicated regularly to members, particularly in the monthly *Metrics* report. Shirley Coulter concluded: "The SCSI is strongly positioned to support members along the way, and I look forward to working with all members on the plan's delivery".

## GRADUATION OF 184 CHARTERED MEMBERS!

The SCSI recently welcomed 184 newly qualified Chartered members at a virtual graduation ceremony. This marks a significant professional achievement following their successful completion of the APC Final Assessment.

These new members have demonstrated the skills and competencies commensurate with the highest standards of the property, land and construction professions. We commend and congratulate each of these new professional members for their hard work and dedication. We look forward to them now shaping our profession for the future as they continue their professional journey.

As we welcome a new generation of members, we also continue our work to ensure that the next group of future professionals are considering this career. With many students considering their college courses, we are rolling out our CAO Change of Mind campaign. Help us to promote the benefits of careers in property, land and construction by highlighting courses available to choose from – see the course information page on our website for details.

We also invite members to share their own story on social media with the hashtag #ChooseSurveying, which we will then use as part of our campaign.

# SCSI CALLS FOR €7BN FOR HOUSING

SCSI President T.J. Cronin has called on the Government to increase the housing budget to €7bn and encouraged a long-term strategic approach rather than implementing short-term, reactionary measures. He told the *Irish Independent*: "The SCSI has been calling for a major Government-funded house-building programme, involving

both the private and public sectors, for some time. Even at the pre-Covid rate of output – circa 20,000 units – we forecast that supply and demand would not be in equilibrium until 2031. Unless drastic action is taken, tens of thousands of people hoping to buy an affordable home will face another decade of despair".

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW SCSI FELLOWS

The Fellowship grade of SCSI membership represents a prestigious award that reflects the career achievements of a special group of property, land and construction professionals.

Attaining the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland Fellowship is a true mark of distinction. Congratulations to the new fellows:

- Elaine Torpey – Valuations
- Brian Gilson – Valuations
- Ronan Diamond – Valuations
- Sabrina Mackin – Building Surveying
- Peter McCarthy – Quantity Surveying

- Donal Hennessy – Quantity Surveying
- John F. O'Brien – Quantity Surveying
- Enda McGuane – Property and Facilities Management
- Fergus McMahan – Quantity Surveying
- Ruairi O'Driscoll – Quantity Surveying
- Paul Greaney – Quantity Surveying
- Dan Boyd – Property and Facilities Management

Thank you for your continued service to the profession.

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New Earn as You Learn undergraduate programmes in Real Estate, Geospatial Surveying and Construction Management coming on stream in **September 2021**

# NATIONAL ECONOMIC DIALOGUE



SCSI CEO Shirley Coulter spoke strongly on the need to ensure that policies are in place for affordable and viable housing delivery in addressing the Minister for Housing, Darragh O'Brien TD, who chaired the housing workshop at the recent National Economic Dialogue 2021. The Minister highlighted his priority to address housing delivery through the forthcoming 'Housing for All' strategy, which will be supported in Budget 2022. Housing For All sets out a roadmap for the delivery of housing across the public and private sectors.

A number of the contributors to the discussion cited the SCSI Real Costs of New Apartment/Housing Delivery reports in framing their recommendations. The National Economic Dialogue is a two-day forum for

Ministers, employer bodies, trade unions, the social and environmental pillars, and other representative groups ahead of Budget 2022.

Taoiseach Micheál Martin's opening address put the housing sector at the centre of the Government's recovery plans. He said: "We need to improve how we plan and deliver housing, with necessary capacity and drive in the public service, as well as fewer delays through legal challenges to badly needed housing".

The SCSI is always interested to hear new ideas from members across the country to help strengthen our recommendations to key policymakers. Therefore, we invite you as a member to share your views to help inform our pre-Budget submission, which is currently being drafted.



## NEW MEMBER SUPPORT OFFICER

Neil Flannery joins the SCSI in the new full-time position of Member Support Officer. Neil is a recent graduate of the Auctioneering, Valuation and Real Estate course in Technological University Dublin, and has experience within the residential market of both sales and property management.

Neil will be available to members across all our professional and regional groups for any queries on issues impacting the profession, while also

ensuring that members are kept informed of any changes affecting their sectors.

If you have any specific queries relating to the services you offer to clients, professional standards, suggestions on how the SCSI can improve its services, or any queries you think the SCSI can help you with, please get in touch with Neil directly at: [neil@scsi.ie](mailto:neil@scsi.ie).

## MEMBERS RAISE OVER €2,600 FOR CHARITYS



The SCSI team at the Charity Run. Top row (from left): Shirley Coulter, SCSI CEO; Michelle Smith, Virtual Events and CPD Co-ordinator; and, Audrey Jordan, Communications and Digital Marketing Co-ordinator. Middle row: James Lonergan, Director of Education and CPD; SCSI President T.J. Cronin; and, Edward McAuley, Director of Practice and Policy. Bottom row: Katie Dempsey, Policy and Research Executive; Neil Flannery, Member Support Officer; and, Miriam Smith, Member Support Administrator and Front of House.

The SCSI is delighted to share that over €2,600 has been raised to support the work of Focus Ireland and LionHeart. Over 100 runners took part in the SCSI's recent 5km Charity Run, which raised more than €1,500 to support Focus Ireland in its work to help those experiencing homelessness. Congratulations to Catherine Green of Ardmac for taking the prize for the fastest female runner with a time of 24.33 and Fergal Cassin of KSN Construction for taking the prize for the fastest male runner with a time of 18.04. In addition to the Charity Run, and in place of the annual LionHeart golf fundraising event, the SCSI ran a weeklong campaign to promote LionHeart services and raise funds for the only charity exclusively supporting Chartered Surveyors. Over €1,100 was raised to help LionHeart provide counselling, career support, grants, legal advice and much more to SCSI members in Ireland. Thank you to all who took part in the Run and donated to support these excellent charities. The SCSI is proud to continue its commitment to corporate social responsibility, and to help those experiencing homelessness and surveyors needing extra support at this time.

## SCSI ONLINE PSRA CPD

The SCSI has gathered together leading experts to deliver a comprehensive CPD programme that gives you the tools to grow your business, empower your staff and stay ahead of the curve in business. With our new PSRA CPD programme, you can now complete all five hours online at your convenience, and over 620 members have already enrolled. For fully paid SCSI members, the PSRA CPD is included in your SCSI member subscription.



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# A FLOOD OF TASKS

MINISTER OF STATE PATRICK O'DONOVAN TD HAS BEEN AT THE HELM OF THE OPW FOR OVER A YEAR AND IS EAGER TO TACKLE THE LONG LIST OF JOBS THE OFFICE HAS TO DEAL WITH.

**P**

atrick O'Donovan TD was elected in the Limerick County constituency in 2011 and has been Minister of State for the Office of Public Works (OPW) since 2020. He says the

two main projects the organisation is focused on are flood risk management and coastal erosion. Before taking on the role, he did not think that flood risk in Ireland was a major problem, but now he says: "It is very bad and

the pace that we're delivering at is worrying ... if we continue to try to deliver at the pace we're delivering at, based on the framework that we are being told we have to deliver within, it is frustratingly slow".

## INTERVIEW

Colm Quinn  
Journalist and Sub-Editor,  
Think Media



## THESE ARE HUGE SCHEMES PROTECTING HUGE POPULATION BASES THAT HAVE TO BE BUILT BECAUSE THE RATE OF CHANGE THE CLIMATE IS EXPERIENCING IS A LOT FASTER THAN THE RATE OF CHANGE THAT THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM THAT WE ARE BEING EXPECTED TO GO THROUGH IS DELIVERING FOR US.

There are areas of high population density at risk. Patrick says he really worries about areas like Cork City, all of the southern coastline, the eastern coastline and the Shannon Basin. He says that schemes are needed in many places across the country: "These are huge schemes protecting huge population bases that have to be built because the rate of change the climate is experiencing is a lot faster than the rate of change that the administrative system that we are being expected to go through is delivering for us".

Patrick says this is frustrating and that it is something he has often brought up with his colleagues in Government: "I can say this as Minister and my officials mightn't like me saying it, but I can say it politically as Minister: we are going to have to start playing a lot more hardball with some of my colleagues in Government, because there are communities at risk that we have to protect".

### Where the OPW is going

Lockdown has given Patrick time to discuss and think about where he would like the OPW to go and to develop a new strategy for the organisation. To get a clear picture of what people believe the focus of the OPW should be, he says he has held a huge number of bilateral meetings since being appointed, listening to the opinions of other TDs, councillors, staff, constituents, and local authority members, as

well as representative groups: "Obviously, everyone has their own view of where it needs to be, and I've now settled on where I believe we need to go and the strategy is a document that I think will be different to other Government departments in the sense that it's not a big bulky lever-arch file. It's simple, in simple language".

He says he wants the OPW to develop a project management-type approach and says the staff in the OPW have welcomed this: "I want simplified language, with clear measurables that people can understand in charts and dates and statistics that we can say to people, look, we're on target or we're behind target".

### Rural regeneration

Rural regeneration is another area that the OPW is focused on, in partnership with the Department of Rural and Community Development. The OPW manages facilities across the country and Patrick expects this role to expand: "The Office of Public Works maintains and looks after offices all over the country. It's my expectation that would grow. The Department of Rural and Community Development wants to expand the remit in terms of the relationship between local authorities and the Office of Public Works".

Facilities managers in the SCSi will realise the challenges inherent in managing a huge portfolio of properties: "We have responsibility for the accommodation of thousands of people. We also invest very heavily in rural communities; hundreds of millions of Euro have already been invested in rural communities and in enhancing rural communities as places to invest in".



**I'M GLAD TO SEE THAT IN THE SHORT TIME I'VE BEEN  
HERE WE HAVE TAKEN ON INITIATIVES THAT WHEN  
GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED US TO DO THINGS, WE HAVE  
PUT UP OUR HANDS AND SAID YES, WE'LL DO THAT.**

### Open to new ideas

Patrick says he can see the value that professional bodies like the SCSi can bring to Government departments: "We're always looking to the next generation of skilled people that are coming on.

We're always going to be [doing this], and I'm very conscious of this and it's something that I really want to drive, that the OPW is an evolving, moving, changing organisation ... We always have to be attuned to and awake to new ideas, to continuous professional development, to innovation".

He says he is enthusiastic about new technologies, such as how the OPW has embraced building information management (BIM): "Everything that's out there by way of new technology and new ways of doing business and new ways of making sure that we're a flexible, malleable, fit-for-purpose, modern organisation – those are the kinds of things that we certainly will be open to suggestions on".

Patrick also explains that he would like the OPW to become the first port of call within Government for large-scale construction projects: "That's not the case at the moment. It was the case once upon a time when the State was founded and prior to the foundation of the State. The commissioners of the Office of Public Works were like Ronseal: they did what it said on the tin. If there were public works to be done, they did them, and I think there is greater scope for us to do more. There was a time when the OPW

built hospitals, we built piers, we built harbours. We don't do those things anymore. Is there a scope for us to go back and do more? Absolutely ... But we have gotten roles in other areas that we didn't have previously.

I want to see the role widened. I want to see the responsibilities increased. I'm glad to see that in the short time I've been here we have taken on initiatives that when Government has asked us to do things, we have put up our hands and said yes, we'll do that. For instance, we've closed out the works that were needed in relation to Brexit in Dublin Port. There's further works that are needed in Rosslare Europort, which we'll do".

When it comes to a specific message for property and construction professionals, Patrick says the OPW is open for business: "We are a big player in the sense that we are here on behalf of the State. We have a lot to bring to the table. We have big demands. Our demands are changing in terms of climate change. I think Covid has changed our expectations going forward. New and remote forms of working will be different. There will be changes in terms of people's expectations of where they work, how they work, when they work, who they work with".

### Construction contracts

When the OPW is procuring works, Patrick says that there are three things the department is focused on: that projects are built on time; that they are built to a certain level of quality; and, that the OPW gets value for money: "Those three things are equally important and they're ranked very highly".

The Minister was asked if there were any aspects of the Construction Contracts Act 2016 that he is unhappy with: "This is something that myself and Minister Michael McGrath will be discussing in the near future, not only the operation of the public works contract, but its impact on delivery for the National Development Plan. It isn't without its problems ... It isn't perfect but it is an evolving situation".

## GETTING INVOLVED

Before becoming a TD, Patrick studied Chemistry and Maths at UCC, where he got involved with Young Fine Gael. He was the President of Young Fine Gael nationally and out of that, he met people like Leo Varadkar: "My interest in Fine Gael deepened when I went into university. I didn't come from a political family. My mother came from a traditionally very strong Fianna Fáil family. My father came from a traditionally Fine Gael family, but neither of them would have been active in politics".

Patrick has three children under the age of six and they take up all of his free time at the moment, which usually involves something like training or Peppa Pig.

He also enjoys gardening and cycling.

He says he steers away from the news as much as he can: "I try and get my news in the morning because too much of it is bad for you. Too much news is bad for you, particularly when you're in politics".



## IRELAND'S LARGEST DEDICATED PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY

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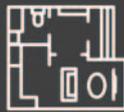
BUILD TO RENT / PRS  
MANAGEMENT (RESIDENTIAL  
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT)



VALUATION,  
RENT REVIEWS &  
PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES



SUSTAINABILITY  
SERVICES



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# FOUR WAYS FOR MEMBERS TO USE THE REFRESHED SCSi LOGO

ESTABLISH YOURSELF AND YOUR BUSINESS AS PROFESSIONALS WITH THE HIGHEST STANDARDS.

The Society has recently refreshed its corporate identity as follows:



We are asking members to use that branding for their own benefit.

## The purpose is:

- to show your clients and potential clients that you practise to the highest international standards;
- to identify you as a business person who is best qualified to carry out your professional work; and,
- to identify the SCSi as the leading professional body in property, land and construction.

## 1 Email signatures

You can add the correct icon to your email signature with the appropriate professional skill (Estate Agent, Auctioneer, Valuer, Quantity Surveyor, Building Surveyor, etc.), followed by the title of membership – Associate, Chartered, Fellow.

*These icons are available from a new branding page on the members' area of the Society's website.*

Here are some examples:



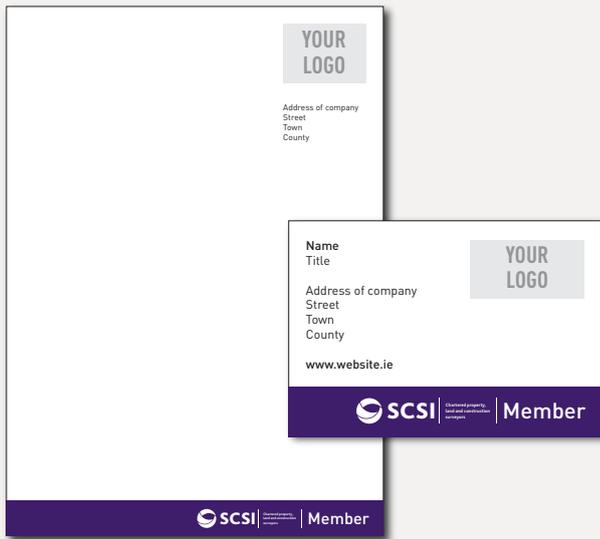
Name  
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Address  
Phone



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# 2

## Letterheads and business cards

There is a standard format for use of our logo on company letterheads and business cards. The logo should not be used in any way other than as shown on letterheads and business cards.

*The artwork for the SCSI and RICS logos is available from the branding page on the members' area of the Society's website. Members are advised to note the restrictions on the use of the RICS logo (see panel below).*

# 3

## Office window signs



For all members, two window signs are enclosed with this edition of the *Surveyors Journal*.

*Further copies can be purchased by any member at a nominal cost from Audrey Jordan, Communications and Digital Marketing Co-ordinator (audrey@scsi.ie).*

# 4

## For Sale, Sale Agreed and Sold signage

Members are encouraged to add the Society's logo to their property transactions signs so that buyers and sellers are aware if the company is a member or not. All 'For Sale', 'Sale Agreed' and 'Sold' signs should carry the SCSI logo as illustrated here.

*The artwork for use on these signs is available from the branding page on the members' area of the Society's website and will need to be given to your sign makers.*



## Use of RICS logo

For Fellows, Chartered Members and some Associates of the SCSI who are RICS members, the RICS logo can also be used where it is appropriate to the individual such as on personal stationery. Use of the logo by firms is only allowed when the firm is formally registered for regulation with RICS. The RICS logo is a registered trademark and should not be used or altered without permission.

**For more details see:**

<https://www.rics.org/globalassets/rics-website/media/news/consultations/rics-logo-use-and-designation-rules---exposure-draft-december-2018.pdf>

All artwork is available from the branding page on the members' area of the SCSI website. For any queries related to the brand, please contact the Communications and Digital Marketing Co-ordinator on 01 664 5500 or by email to [info@scsi.ie](mailto:info@scsi.ie).

# COVID POSITIVES

WHEN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC TURNED OUR WORKING LIVES UPSIDE DOWN IN MARCH 2020, SURVEYORS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY HAD TO ADAPT TO NEW WORK PRACTICES SUCH AS WORKING FROM HOME AND REMOTE VIEWINGS/INSPECTIONS ALMOST OVERNIGHT.

SIXTEEN MONTHS LATER, MANY OF THE INNOVATIONS THEY ADOPTED HAVE BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL THAT THEY ARE LIKELY TO BE RETAINED AS WE MOVE TOWARDS A FULL REOPENING OF SOCIETY. WE SPOKE TO SURVEYORS FROM A RANGE OF SECTORS ABOUT HOW THEY'VE ADAPTED, AND HOW COVID-19 HAS CHANGED THE FUTURE OF THEIR SECTOR.

## Building surveying – Sabrina Mackin

"Building surveyors were using digital tools/platforms before the pandemic, although the construction and property industry have been 'late adopters' generally. Surveyors quickly pivoted and innovated during Covid-19 to ensure that we continued to deliver to clients. Innovations have included virtual surveys and virtually assisted client walk rounds, virtual contractor claim reviews and certifications. We adhered to Government and Property Services Regulatory Authority (PSRA) guidance. Where we could conduct physical inspection, we did so with the greatest attention to health and safety, including ensuring that the building was vacant, wearing masks, sanitising surfaces, etc.

One of the practices that is likely to be retained is video conferencing. At this point everyone has Zoom/Teams fatigue, but these platforms certainly did keep business moving in the last year. I believe that we will still use these, especially for meetings where there are several people in different locations.

In the long term we will be more digitally adept. I also believe that we will be more fluid in our approach to being 'in the office'. As surveyors, it is very important to learn by example, and that is done best by shadowing a more experienced surveyor, both during inspections and in the office on calls and writing reports. The need to collaborate face to face certainly will not go away, but we'll be more agile in our approach.

Client instructions didn't stop because of the pandemic, so we learned that to be able to keep an instruction or a client, you have to pivot and adapt, within the statutory and professional guidelines of course. We've learned that we work better with strong links with other surveyors, and the support network and resources of the SCSI.

I feel very positive about the future for building surveyors. In the pandemic, building surveyors supported each other, and we took time to look beyond our own businesses to the next generation. We strengthened links with our university building surveying programme, and we arranged as many CPDs as possible."

AT THIS POINT EVERYONE HAS ZOOM/TEAMS FATIGUE, BUT THESE PLATFORMS CERTAINLY DID KEEP BUSINESS MOVING IN THE LAST YEAR.





### Dispute resolution – Martin Waldron

“The most obvious innovation/change was the move to online alternative dispute resolution (ADR). Prior to the pandemic, online ADR was an academic topic for many practitioners, including myself. Conciliations and mediations, which until recently have been the main forms of construction ADR, have always been very much focused on people sitting in rooms trying to resolve and/or present their cases. However, after some reluctance and out of simple necessity, parties have now embraced online hearings. With online hearings, it is possible to have multiple meeting rooms open for the parties. I found this to be extremely efficient. Gone is the need for everyone to decamp into separate rooms and then reconvene; instead, it is now possible to move between rooms in minutes. Also gone is the expense and inconvenience of having everyone meet, sometimes for days on end, in a hotel or conference facility with multiple room rentals.

The new ADR process in Ireland, adjudication, is often paper-only based and so these were relatively unaffected by the pandemic. However, as a result of entire contractor management teams working from home, many disputes that were on the back burner were brought to the fore. This form of ADR got fully established during the pandemic, where it had barely trickled along for the first three years of implementation.

I expect online ADR to play an ongoing and large role into the future. I also think the shift towards adjudication is permanent. We have learned that being flexible and open to change is always for the better in work practices. The legal and ADR landscape is notoriously slow to change; hopefully, this crisis will have changed that for the better. The ADR sector faces many challenges, but I think it has matured in Ireland during the pandemic and I think the sector will flourish in the coming years.”

### Planning and development surveying

#### Sarah Forde:

“We have introduced a number of new work practices, which are likely to remain in some fashion. Once the Covid restrictions/guidelines were introduced we had to get used to using Microsoft Teams/Zoom for design team meetings. While it was an adjustment (particularly getting used to reviewing plans and drawings on screen), we save huge amounts of time not having to travel to and from in-person meetings. The virtual meetings have also allowed us to address any issues/queries a lot quicker given that there seems to be more flexibility to arrange meetings at shorter notice. It would be great to see the planning system embrace technology further, i.e., the ability to submit applications online. On the construction side we introduced a one trade per floor policy in the construction of apartments. This was initially to accommodate social distancing but has had benefits for the sequencing of works. The increased emphasis on hand washing, ventilation, etc., will remain.”

#### Philip Littlewood:

“I had to complete a development appraisal on a site in Kerry, at a time when I wasn’t allowed to travel there and we were at the height of the restrictions. The valuation was needed and I had to find a way to do it. I knew the location well enough and I had good development cost information and programme, plus all the other costs such as developer obligations to the local authority, etc., so I had the makings of an appraisal. The contractor had set up a time-lapse camera on site, so I was able to take very good quality site progress photos for my report and provide the funder with a dated site progress report, which in a pre-Covid world, I may not have been able to do so accurately. There’s no substitute for pulling on the boots and walking the site, but it did enable me to complete a report and get the development funded. A selection of letters from the banks in the glove box has been essential for moving through Garda checkpoints as well. I’ve also been using drones more for site ‘inspections’ and that’s certainly something that I’ll be taking forward.”



#### Mark McKernan:

“The move towards planning application submissions being facilitated online rather than hard copies only is long overdue. This has been a very slow process over the last number of years but seems to be gaining momentum now due to the Covid-19 restrictions. The rollout of the LGMA e-planning portal is expected for some local authorities over the coming months. The initiatives in city and town centres for increased pedestrian, cycling and outdoor retail/dining facilities, particularly evident in Dublin and Cork, has obvious benefits in relation to carbon reduction targets, etc. It will be interesting to see if these initiatives are retained permanently as normality returns.”

**AS A SECTOR WE NEED TO BE EVEN MORE AGILE AS WE MOVE FORWARD. OFFICE BUILDINGS WILL BECOME MORE AND MORE ABOUT THE 'USER'S JOURNEY' AND THE EXPERIENCE, AND THE PMFM SECTOR HAS A REAL OPPORTUNITY TO ADD VALUE FOR LANDLORDS AND OCCUPIERS.**

#### Property and facilities management – Sarah Lynch

"The PMFM sector at each stage of the pandemic has outlined good practices for workspace organisation and technical requirements. This has involved understanding occupiers' needs, particularly in multi-tenanted buildings, giving consideration to operating strategy and cost implications. Social distance implementation has probably brought about some of the most significant changes to the 'user's journey' and human movement throughout buildings. The PMFM sector realised the organisation of entire buildings in common spaces and occupier workplaces to adapt to workplace density of occupants and their needs. Technical requirements for buildings changed significantly too. With access still required for essential works and services, it was not as straightforward as mothballing buildings. Reassessments of the operation of services such as ventilation, building management systems (BMS), water testing and flushing, as well as statutory regulations to comply with in terms of security, fire and life safety systems, were required.

Touchless technology for access control is here to stay, for example, automated door opening, touch-free sensor buttons for exits, integrated smartphone technology for speed lanes and lifts, touchless sanitary ware and associated facilities. Contactless devices and services will also be the preference, such as contactless collection of post and parcels through the use of lockers and QR code scanning. New office developments will come with these features as standard, while in existing offices landlords and occupiers are retrospectively fitting these solutions in anticipation of the return to the workplace.

PropTech will provide the PMFM sector with the tools to monitor and react in real time to factors like temperature, air quality, light, electricity and availability of services such as meeting rooms, wellness and fitness areas, car spaces and bicycle storage. Occupancy sensors to monitor human behaviour will feature more high traffic areas like coffee docks and beverage services to maintain safe operating protocols. The ongoing data will then allow landlords and occupiers to make decisions on improvements based on the social interaction in a building.

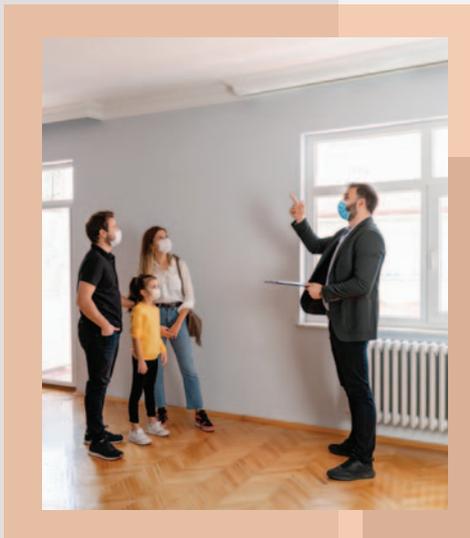
As a sector we need to be even more agile as we move forward. Office buildings will become more and more about the 'user's journey' and the experience, and the PMFM sector has a real opportunity to add value for landlords and occupiers. The PMFM sector will continue to experience growth because the user continues to demand an experience from the building."



## Residential property management – Finbar McDonnell

“Unlike commercial buildings, apartment blocks have seen high occupancy, with more people working from home, restrictions on travel and children off school for long periods. There have also been residents, especially older residents, cocooning. This has had many practical implications. For example, increased cleaning and hand sanitiser dispensers may have been introduced in many developments, subject to the wishes of owners’ management companies (OMCs). Facilities such as gyms have been shut, with strict new procedures introduced when they reopened. The amount of refuse collected has increased considerably, with implications for budgets. Another change has been the huge growth in deliveries of parcels, with implications for the space in reception areas, security, CCTV, and so on. House rules have come under pressure too, as different residents have different needs, e.g., people working from home complaining about noise from children playing outside, etc. On the other hand, residents have often formed informal networks to help each other, e.g., buying groceries, etc. All of these changes have impacted on how property managers operate, and this has had to happen while the property managers’ own work practices have been greatly modified. Property managers will always need to be on site as you have to walk a site regularly to identify problems or issues. That said, meetings with Boards of OMCs are likely to stay online. This will save travel time for all, as well as the cost of renting meeting rooms. It also allows experts to be ‘zoomed in’ and improves the quality of meetings. We are also having more lunchtime meetings, which reduces the pressure of evening meetings, the bane of residential property managers’ lives! The more formal AGMs have also moved online. It is to be hoped that the temporary legislation that has permitted this will be made permanent. As each OMC is a separate registered company, managing agents have a lot of interaction with the Companies Registration Office (CRO). This has also moved online and, to be honest, there have been teething problems and delays. There is the potential for a step-change here, to everyone’s benefit, but the systems, processes and resources are not yet where they need to be. The ability of all of the staff of managing agent companies to work remotely, including administrative staff, is something that has been firmly put on the agenda. The pandemic has demonstrated clearly to residents of multi-unit developments the importance of professional residential property management. A challenge for managing agents will be to ensure that, when they provide a very good service, this is recognised and properly paid for. The level of technical expertise and people management skills required is often underestimated and therefore undervalued by OMCs.

Ireland has a huge housing shortage and this is focused on urban areas. Most new housing units required are apartments, so there will be a big growth in the number of multi-unit developments in Ireland in the next decade. As such, demand for residential property management services will see continuous growth.”



## Quantity surveying – Tomás Kelly

“Some pre-Covid-19 work practices were very inefficient (large numbers of people attending face-to-face meetings). Standard operating procedures (SOPs) can be widely adopted in a very short period of time. Cloud-based IT systems are more suitable than relying on local servers when working remotely, and a lot of companies had to move key software packages such as CostX or CAD to the cloud at the start of the pandemic.

The increased use of digital tools (Zoom, document sharing platforms, etc.) is increasing awareness and adoption of other technology. There is also now an increased focus on potential/use of off-site production. Contractors have put more rigorous health and safety plans in place, which are likely to become normal practice even after the pandemic. This can only benefit the construction industry.

The pandemic has also led to an enhanced focus on the climate emergency. It was evident that greenhouse gas emissions dropped significantly when lockdowns were introduced. This helped to identify what could be achieved in relation to emissions if nations worked together. We are now seeing many multinational organisations committing to significant emission reductions and changes to work practices. There has been an improvement in mental and physical health for many construction workers/professionals as a result of fewer hours spent driving to offices and more time spent with family, etc.

Videos of site progress have been very well received by clients. Professional services moved quickly and smoothly to a working from home model, and employers adapted quickly to flexible working times for employees.

Working from home will continue in a hybrid model of home/office/site visits. Acceptance of the virtual meetings via Zoom/MS Teams will continue for the most part (face to face is still beneficial but to a lesser extent). Improved/more



detailed site health and safety plans will continue to be implemented, which will only improve safety in the industry. Faster adoption and use of digital tools and off-site production will also continue.”

# THE MUD ACT AT 10

A DECADE HAS PASSED SINCE THE MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENTS ACT 2011 CAME INTO FORCE, SO IT IS TIMELY TO LOOK BACK AT SOME OF THE CHANGES IN THE MUDs SECTOR.\*

**M**uch has changed across the multi-unit developments (MUDs) landscape in the 10 years since the Multi-Unit Developments Act 2011 came into force. A reflection on changes in the period from April 2011 reveals legal and regulatory advances, insightful contributions to thinking, and new entrants to the sector. An awareness of the increasing complexity of the sector can help to sustain MUD communities into the future.

## Using the MUD Act

Before discussing sectoral changes in the last 10 years, several of the provisions of the MUD Act that are directly relevant to owners are worth considering. Measures introduced transparency around the finances of owners' management companies (OMCs). For example, the annual report prepared in line with section 17 of the Act should present a clear view of the position of the OMC and the estate. Owners can expect to be kept up to date about key financial information and plans for future maintenance programmes. Elsewhere in this issue, Noel Larkin highlights the importance of sinking funds (page 30). The Act delivered clarity in relation to voting rights of OMC members, certainty about developers' obligations on the transfer of common areas to the OMC, and equity in the apportionment of service charges. Section 23 (11), allowing an OMC to recover from owners costs associated with breaches of house rules, can be an effective curb on disturbances. The extent to which provisions of the Act for mediation and dispute resolution are used is difficult to measure; reports of Circuit Court decisions are scarce.

## Contributions to thinking

The report 'Owners' Management Companies: Sustainable apartment living for Ireland', authored in 2019 by SCSi member Paul Mooney, was commissioned by The Housing Agency and Clúid Housing. It compared the Irish model of apartment management to structures and law in four other countries. The report made recommendations for regulatory change in Ireland. Last October's 'Review of the Administration of Civil Justice 2020', a report to the Minister for Justice, contained proposals for reform of the wider legal system, potentially with implications for the MUDs sector. For example, the report considers the place of online dispute resolution in the system of civil justice. The SCSi's 2018 report 'Sinking Funds: Meeting the Challenge', and its recent paper 'Review of Multi-Unit Development legislation – Policy position' set out proposals for reform.

Over the last 10 years, studies and dissertations written in furtherance of academic qualifications have delivered useful insights on the operation of the MUD Act. Outside of academic writing, *Owners' Management Company: Law and Best Practice* by Aisling Keenan is a practical reference book for the sector. Lessons can be drawn from this literature, and from the lived experience. Simple as it may seem, the key distinction between the role of the OMC, as principal, and the job of the property services provider as management agent, is a message worthy of continuing communication by all stakeholders. In February 2021, The Housing Agency published 'Engaging a Property Management Agent: Guidance for Owners' Management Companies'. This information is intended to assist OMCs with the important process of selecting a management agent. Clarity concerning the source of rights and responsibilities can pre-empt disputes or smooth their early resolution. Readers will be familiar with three primary source categories:

- contracts, principally the estate head lease, or the contract between the OMC and the agent;
- governance, for example the constitution of the OMC; and,
- legislation – the MUD Act, the Companies Act 2014, and the Property Services (Regulation) Act 2011.

## Corporate legal framework

Coming into force in 2015, the Companies Act 2014 consolidated multiple pieces of legislation amending the Companies Act 1963. The 2014 Act and its subsequent amendments form the company law framework under which all companies, including OMCs, operate. The codification of directors' fiduciary duties, previously established in common law, into section 228 of the Companies Act, provides a frame of reference for OMC directors in relation to the obligations of their role. The Companies (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Covid-19) Act 2020 facilitated a switch to virtual annual general meetings and

## FEATURE

David Rouse  
Multi-Unit Developments Advisor,  
The Housing Agency



voting for OMCs. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this has led to increased attendances at AGMs by homeowners. These innovations are due to be made permanent under proposed changes to company law. May 2021 saw The Housing Agency and Chartered Accountants Ireland publish 'Owners' Management Companies: A Concise Guide for Directors'. The guide focuses on 10 corporate governance considerations for OMC directors. Its purpose is to help directors to navigate important matters such as directors' duties, financial management, outsourcing, and OMC performance.

### MUDs and planning

The 'Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments' were issued in March 2018, and amended in December 2020. Under paragraphs 6.11-6.14, assessments by local authorities of apartment planning applications must consider the long-term running costs and eventual manner of compliance of proposals with the MUD Act. Applications must include a building lifecycle report, to include an assessment of long-term running and maintenance costs as they would apply on a per residential unit basis. In addition, applications must demonstrate what measures have been specifically considered effectively to manage and reduce costs for the benefit of residents. When granting permission, planning authorities are advised to attach appropriate conditions that require compliance with the MUD Act, establishment of an OMC, and establishment and ongoing maintenance of a sinking fund.

### Service providers and consumer protections

April 2022 will mark a decade since the Property Services Regulatory Authority (PSRA) was established. Readers will be familiar with the supports and oversight established under the system of regulation and licensing. Professional competence requirements and client money safeguards apply. At the end of 2020 new minimum standards, accompanied by a code of

practice, were added to the framework of consumer protection.

### Sector new entrants

In the last decade new participants – commercial institutional landlords like REITs and similar funds – have entered the MUD sector. Approved housing bodies (AHBs) now build or buy homes, many of which are managed as MUDs. Local authorities play an increasingly prominent role in MUDs through arrangements including Part V acquisition, leasing, and construction. These changes can bring complexity and experience to the sector, and to the management of individual estates.

### Technology, climate action and sustainability

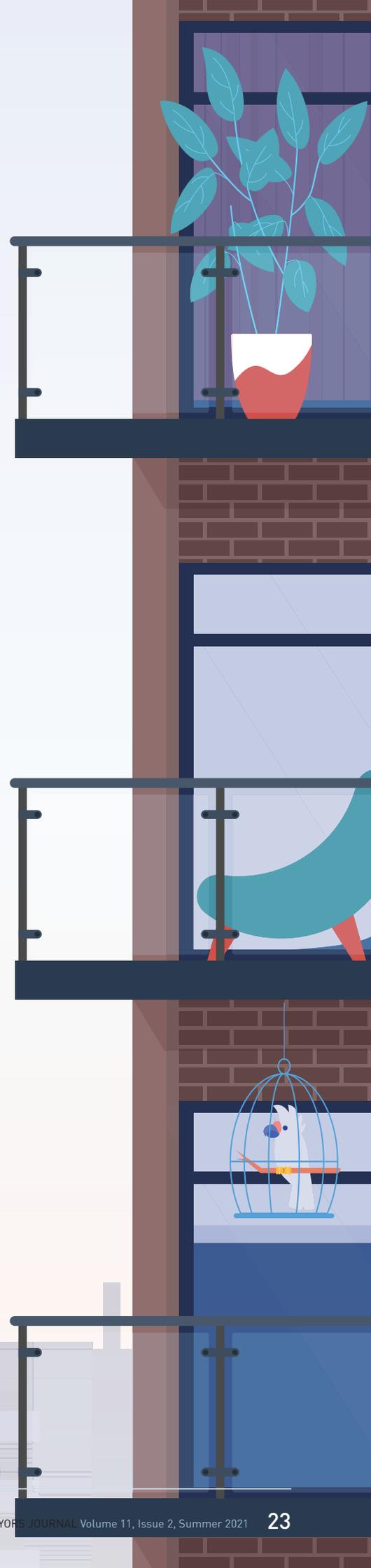
Aside from the switch to virtual meetings brought about by the pandemic, technological advances employing web-based portals and applications offer estate management and reporting in real time. New approaches to environmental sustainability, de-carbonisation, and renewables continue to be driven by legislative change and residents' expectations. New MUDs can plan outcomes at design stage by way of energy-saving components. Limited financial resources, and spatial or title constraints in existing MUDs may pose challenges to retrofitting, for example, installing electrical vehicle charging infrastructure in common areas.

### Further change

Other changes in the landscape in the decade since the arrival of the MUD Act include the Building Control (Amendment) Regulations 2014, guidance in relation to fire safety in MUDs, and the establishment by the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage of an independent working group to examine the issue of defective housing.

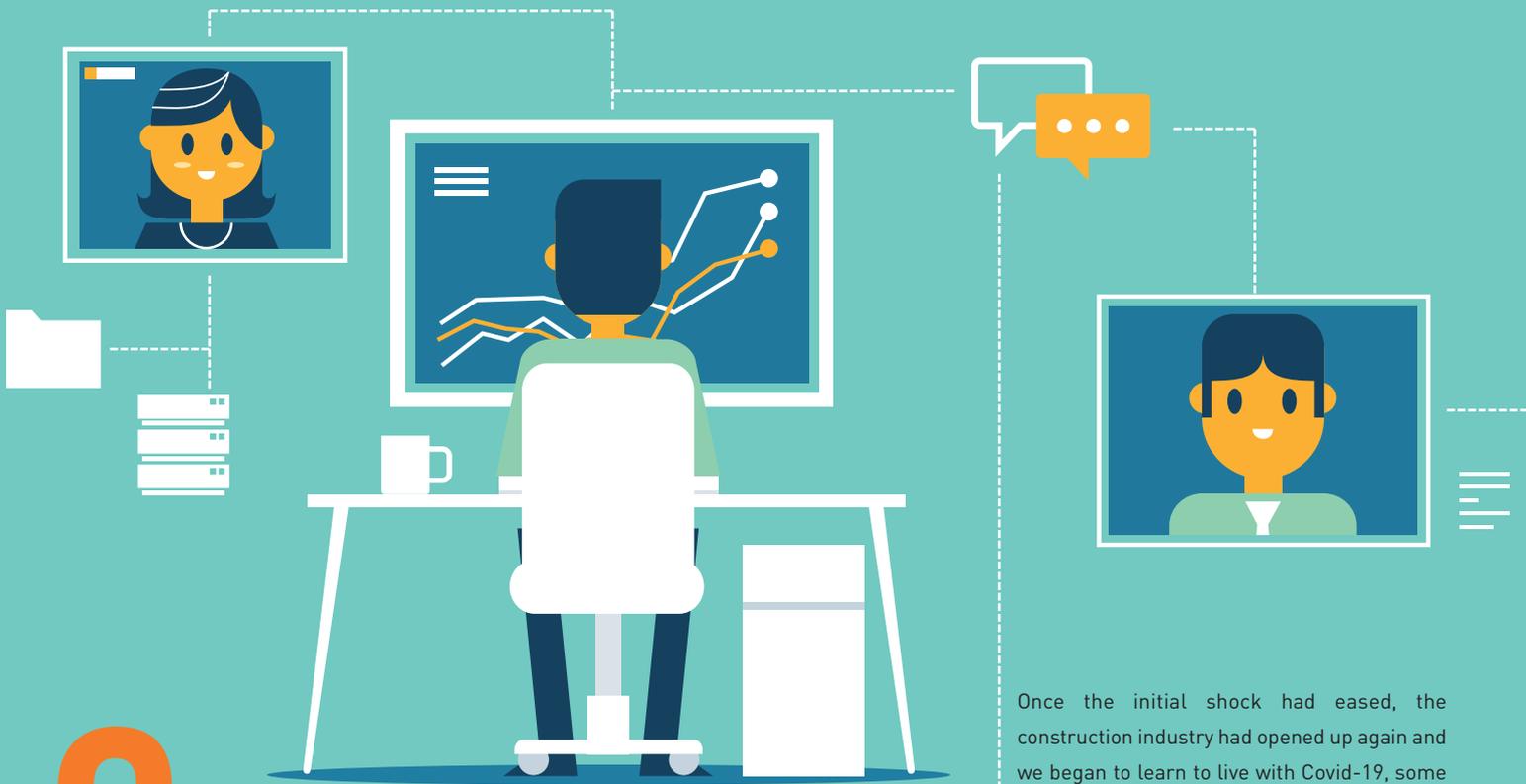
The MUDs sector is no exception to Heraclitus's proposition that change is the only constant in life.

\*Views expressed are those of the author.



# REMOTE BUT NOT ALONE

STARTING A NEW JOB CAN BE DAUNTING AT THE BEST OF TIMES, BUT THIS ERA OF REMOTE WORKING PRESENTS PARTICULAR CHALLENGES. THE SCSi NEXUS COMMITTEE HAS BEEN WORKING ON SOLUTIONS.



**S**tarting a new job or moving company can be a daunting prospect for anyone no matter what stage of their career they are at: navigating the new route to the office, meeting your new manager and team, learning the different work systems (and tea round!), embracing the office culture, and maybe even finding the local watering hole come the end of the week! It can be a stressful period of change and even more so if it is your first job out of college.

"There is no such thing as a stupid question" they say ... except you know there is and you

really don't want to ask one of them! Maybe you can quietly ask the person that sits next to you when no one is around.

You start to pick up the office dynamics and see the different personality types.

You can see when the line manager is busy and when they're free for a quick chat. You start to ease into the new job and feel part of the new team.

## A new world

However, fast forward to 2020, and Covid-19 brought a whole range of changes to our working lives.

To ensure that services continued to be delivered, the majority of us moved to our new home offices and started working remotely.

Once the initial shock had eased, the construction industry had opened up again and we began to learn to live with Covid-19, some employees (and employers) began to realise the benefits of remote working. A recent survey of over 6,400 people in both the public and private sectors in Ireland showed that 95% of workers now favour some form of remote working, with the remaining 5% wanting to return to the office full-time.

The 'hybrid' working model, or the 'mixed mode' of a few days in the office and a few days at home is proving very popular. The benefits of working remotely have been widely accepted, and we have all become accustomed to the virtual working world of managing

our workload, our team and our clients through the computer screen. But what if a new opportunity arises in another firm and you want to change company? What if a new recruit is joining your team? What about student placements and new graduates?

## FEATURE

**Declan Magee**  
Senior QS, Currie & Brown;  
Chair, SCSi Nexus Committee



# LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO JOHN....HE'S ON THE TOP RIGHT OF YOUR SCREEN.

## Daunting

As stated earlier, joining a new company can be a daunting prospect at any stage in one's career. Add in the factor of remote working and you'll find it adds a whole other level of challenge to employer and employee. Is there someone available to introduce them and show them the ropes for the first morning? Is there some work we can get them started on for the first few days? Wait....do they even have a laptop?! Things that can be very easily solved in the office become a lot more challenging when working from home.

When the new recruit gets online, can they navigate the systems and join the team meeting? Has everyone got their cameras on so the new starter can put some faces to names? Once the team call ends, they are on their own until the next call comes through. They are watching the Red and Green status light on Teams: good luck getting them to ask the questions which 'aren't' stupid now! As the week moves along they join some calls, see some faces, learn some names and begin to settle in. Friday 5.00pm comes around, they click shutdown and the work week is over. A very different first week of work.

## Tips for remote starters

So, what can we do to help ease the pressures of starting a new job in this new digital world? As potential new employers or employees, what can be done to reassure people that starting a new job remotely can be done and done successfully? Some simple changes can be incorporated into the introduction process to help alleviate the worries of 'onboarding' in the remote environment.

## Face time

A lot of things that we take for granted can be very strange for new graduates, students or new recruits at any level. The first week in a new company needs to be structured and 'face time' set aside with HR, IT and fellow team members to talk the new team member through the systems and the people they will be working with.

## Equipment

Ensure that the new employee or student has the correct equipment, and that it is set up in a suitable location away from their main living space, if possible. Desk space away from the kitchen will reduce distractions, and encourage breaks to walk to get a cup of tea or snack.



## Routine

Encouraging a routine among new starters is also important. It is very difficult to know when to step away from the computer if you do not see others do it, and this can lead to longer working hours and burnout.

## Checking in

Ask team members to check in with their new colleague from time to time. The new recruit has no one sitting beside them that they can ask a question, and they may not feel comfortable calling colleagues in the early days. Assigning a buddy at a similar level can also help with any issues they might be having.

## Eye contact

Most importantly...cameras on! Nothing beats eye contact, a smile and a facial expression to understand what someone is saying and to feel like you've properly met them. Remember, working remotely does not mean working alone!

## SCSI guidance

The SCSI has worked with Adare HR to create a few key guidance documents for bringing in new staff in a digital/remote working environment. The guidance documents provide helpful tips to assist employers and employees to settle into this new form of working and these are available on the SCSI website at: <https://scsi.ie/remote-working-resources-induction-checklist-and-practical-tips/>.



# MONUMENTAL ISSUES

WHAT DO CHARTERED SURVEYORS NEED TO KNOW WHEN WORKING ON A SITE WHERE A NATIONAL MONUMENT IS LOCATED?

**G**iven the proliferation of archaeological monuments in the Irish landscape, it is highly likely that Chartered Surveyors will be involved with properties containing such structures at some time in their professional careers. This article gives an outline of the legal, documentary and surveying issues related to these monuments that might be helpful to the surveyor.

## Legislation

The legal basis for the care and protection of monuments is provided by the following acts of the Oireachtas:

- National Monument Act 1930 (the primary act);
- National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1954;
- National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987;
- National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994; and,
- National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004.

The primary act defines what constitutes a monument. It further defines what makes a monument a national monument. Responsibility for the protection of monuments was vested originally in the Commissioners of Public Works (CofPW) or the relevant local authority, depending on circumstances. This responsibility currently lies with the National Monuments Service.

## Documentation

The documentation of monuments is extensive and at times confusing. It consists of the following databases and publications:

## FEATURE

Muiris de Buitléir  
Geomatics Committee; joint  
SCSI representative, Council of  
European Geodetic Surveyors.



- the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR);
- the Register of Historic Monuments (RHM);
- the Register of Monuments and Places (RMP);
- the County Inventories of Archaeology (CIA);
- the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH); and,
- the Record of Protected Structures for each planning authority (RPS).

The most important source is the SMR, a database created by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. It contains in excess of 150,000 records. The survey was a desk exercise identifying monuments based on their delineation on Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSi) mapping supplemented by aerial photo interpretation from stereo pairs, and evidence from published historical and archaeological sources. Each record consists of a unique identifier, a definition of the monument type, the townland in which it is located and Irish Grid easting and northing. An extensive paper archive backs this database. The Archive Unit can be contacted at: nmarchive@chg.gov.ie. Because of its method of compilation, the SMR contains sites and structures which, on closer examination, have turned out not to be monuments. It is a reasonably comprehensive record of all features in the Irish landscape that may have an archaeological context, but the listing of a feature in the SMR does not provide legal protection to the feature or indicate that it is a monument as defined in the 1930 Act.

The SMR and the associated databases can be viewed using a GIS application on: <https://www.archaeology.ie/archaeological-survey-ireland>.

### Protection

Monument protection is catered for by a number of provisions under the legislation:

1. Listing Orders.
2. Temporary Preservation Orders (TPO).
3. Preservation Orders (PO).
4. Guardianship.
5. Ownership.
6. Inclusion in the Register of Historic Monuments (RHM).
7. Inclusion in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP).
8. Inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

A **Listing Order** published in Iris Oifigiúil indicated that the feature was considered a monument and the owner was obliged to notify the National Monuments Service if any interference with the monument was planned. This process is now obsolete having been replaced by the procedures below.

A **Preservation Order** can be either temporary (a TPO lasts for six months) or permanent (a PO is of unlimited duration). It can be placed on a monument if the monument is deemed to be in danger of damage or destruction. A PO or TPO prevents interference with the monument under legal sanction during the period of the Order.

**Guardianship** gives the State the right to physically intervene to preserve and



A large percentage of field monuments are circular structures, such as ringforts.

maintain designated monuments. This can be achieved in a number of ways. It can be granted by deed to the National Monuments Service, or the local authority, by the owner. Guardianship does not change the ownership. That remains with the title holder and not with the State or the local authority. Guardianship can also be imposed unilaterally subsequent to a PO.

**Ownership** of a monument by the State involves the transfer of the property to State ownership either by agreement with the owner or through compulsory acquisition. Many monuments in State ownership may have been acquired under old legislation prior to the foundation of the State.

The 1994 (amendment) Act provided that the State should establish and maintain a **Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)**. This record lists all archaeological monuments and sites considered worthy of protection. The listing of a monument in this record provides it with legal protection under the act.

A **Record of Protected Structures (RPS)** is maintained by each planning authority as part of its development plan. The RPS provides the legal basis for the protection of structures of architectural, archaeological, artistic, cultural, social, scientific or technical importance in a local authority's area.

### Mapping

Geographic location for the above

procedures was mixed. Originally there was no mapping, purely a description of the monument and its location together with a listing of the townland in which it was located. From the late 1970s onwards PO extents were defined on 1:2,500 mapping. The rule of thumb was to mark the boundary by a line scaled at 10 metres outside the bottom of the hachures indicating the earthwork on the OS map.

The mapping for the SMR and RMP was based on the OS 6-inch County Series Cassini mapping. The mapped locations were delineated on paper copies of the six-inch map by a black outline. As a large percentage of field monuments were circular structures, such as ringforts, these were circled using a standard circle drafting template allowing an approximate margin of 10 metres around the hachured depiction of the monument. Irregularly shaped monuments were enclosed with an outline broadly following the 10-metre rule of thumb. Given this method of boundary generation, these boundaries can only be considered general indications and not a reliable definition of the area under protection.

In the case of the generality of monuments, no public right of access exists. National Monument Service staff have powers under the Acts to enter on any land in carrying out their duties but for the general public, they must rely on the good will of the owner.

# ARE YOU BUYING INTO BIAS?

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS AFFECTS EVERYONE, BUT IT IS UP TO PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS TO RECOGNISE AND ADDRESS IT.

# U

nconscious bias refers to the social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. It can affect our decisions in life and in the workplace. The problem is not the unconscious thought per se but the behaviour that follows.

Influences such as our upbringing, experiences and exposure to others all play a part in shaping our biases. We display unconscious bias when we favour, or discriminate against, people because of these influences, often without realising it.

We all have unconscious biases. However, when a conversation regarding unconscious biases starts, most people go into defensive mode. If we all have unconscious biases, then there should be no defensiveness or shame in simply discussing and bringing awareness. However, if you bring awareness to your unconscious biases and do not take action, these turn into explicit biases, in which you choose to continue with problematic behaviours.

Diversity across your workforce and at the leadership table is key to continued organisational health. Different thinking and innovation are vital to financial success, so our unconscious preferences for people who look or act like us set us up for stagnation.

## Unconscious bias in the workplace

Biases within the corporate workplace frequently show up in relation to gender, ethnicity, age, and others. Within the organisations linked with the SCSJ, one of the key areas to highlight is gender.

Women represent a mere 20% of the membership of the SCSJ, but this differs significantly across the professional groups. Within property and land, women represent 29.4% of employees. However, within construction this reduces dramatically to 7.4%, with women only representing 5.6% of the statutory register (Building Surveyor and Quantity Surveyor).

In the workplace, unconscious bias is often felt and recognised by the victims in a way that those with unconscious bias do not recognise. It shows up in all aspects of managing a business, such as:

- **recruitment** – hiring managers may gravitate towards candidates that are similar to them in looks, education, age, ethnicity or gender;
- **performance management** – managers may value traits and behaviours that they themselves display, to the neglect of other worthwhile performance metrics;
- **promotion processes** – promotions only going to those who look and act like managers;

## SCSJ REPORT

Tréasa Fitzgibbon  
Professional speaker,  
consultant, and career coach



- **motivation and engagement** – if staff members are negatively impacted by what they perceive as these biases they will be disengaged in their work, which leads to lower productivity; and,
- retention and staff satisfaction.

## Changing the future

The first step to improving our organisational cultures and behaviours is to bring awareness, and action, to our systemic and personal unconscious biases. While it might take time, energy and commitment, it is possible to create a work environment in which all staff members can thrive.

As these biases are unconscious, numerous steps are needed to bring awareness to your thoughts and how they impact on your behaviour, and therefore on others around you:

- **Challenge your own beliefs** – where do they come from? Do you always conform to social stereotypes about gender? What thoughts do you have about younger members of staff versus older? How do these thoughts impact on how you treat individuals? Reflect on how your own behaviour may have been biased in the past, and the impact this has had on others. Focus on the individual in front of you rather than stereotyping them. Once we confine individuals to a group, we make assumptions about them. If you focus on the individual, your behaviour and actions will align to the individual, rather than your assumption about the stereotype.
- **Do a mental flip or swap** – when you are making a statement or decision about someone, flip the statement to someone else to see if it still resonates in the same way. For example, if you are stating that a woman in your team is aggressive, flip the comment to a man. On an organisational level, when companies share that they are taking diversity seriously, they will share goals such as: "Our goal is to have 30% of our leadership roles filled by women by 2022". If you flip this statement it also says: "Our goal is to have 70% of our leadership roles filled by men by 2022". Are you comfortable publishing both of these statements?

- **Set yourself very specific goals for changing your behaviour**, and ensure that you regularly assess where you are in relation to your goal. Identify what actions are working and what further changes are needed to make the goal more attainable.

- **Slow down when making decisions** – when we rush, our brains rely on shortcuts, and in turn biases, to make decisions. When we are in a high-pressure environment we value individuals who are decisive and make quick decisions. However, this leads to repeating the same behaviours. Give yourself more time to weigh up your decisions and understand what biases might be impacting on them.

- **Create an open environment where staff can discuss unconscious biases.** Most people are shocked to discover that they have these biases, and very quick to deny. We judge ourselves and others as 'bad' if they have biases. However, once you create a workplace environment that allows open discussion, without judgement, others will follow your lead.

- **Even with the best of intent, people will behave based on their unconscious bias.** Challenge others by asking probing questions to better understand the thoughts behind their behaviour. This does not mean that you have to berate everyone on your team on a regular basis, but you can diplomatically, and based on fact, draw their attention to the impact of their words and actions on others.

- **Advocate for yourself and others** – recognise when behaviour driven by bias has an impact on you or others.

- **Listen** – it's key to realise that everyone's work and career experience is not the same. Listen to others, be empathetic and open to the idea that you can learn from them.

- **Invest in training** – regular, ongoing unconscious bias training can help organisations to address issues systemically and effectively. You need to have very clear and specific objectives. Concrete action must be taken to make improvements following the training, with regular checks on how you are progressing against the goals identified.

## The benefits of improved diversity

While it might seem hard to quantify the benefits of removing unconscious bias from yourself and your organisation, research points to major improvements across organisations:

- improved financial results (due to diversity of thought);
- accelerated talent attraction and retention;
- a culture of inclusion;
- enhanced diversity and innovation;
- reduced negative effects of biases; and,
- improved brand image.

# DON'T LET THE FUND SINK

A WELL-PLANNED SINKING FUND HELPS THOSE IN MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENTS TO SPREAD THE COST OF REPLACEMENTS OVER MANY YEARS.

It was a cold, wet winter morning. My mother led me by the hand to the green-fronted post office. 5p stamps placed weekly in my savings book would in time amount to a reasonable pot. The autumn seemed far off but it did come and my father brought home his crops. We planned our holiday and my savings book was in a healthy condition, with many pages of Friesian Bull stamps in an array of neat lines. My mother said that money grows on the tree of patience.

The need to prepare for future capital expenditure can be a heavy burden, particularly for someone who has just invested in a property and depleted their savings. However, with careful planning, an understanding of the potential work needed and an accurate projected cost, this burden can be lightened. Pay a little on a regular basis into a sinking fund and the significant cost can be spread out over a number of years and thus more manageable.



## FEATURE

Noel Larkin MRICS MSCSI  
Chartered Building Surveyor



**WE CAN PREDICT WITH SOME CERTAINTY THAT THERE WILL BE A HIGH DEMAND FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AT YEAR 25 OF A BUILDING'S LIFE AND WE CAN ACCURATELY ESTIMATE THIS COST.**

#### Lifespan of building elements

I'm always surprised by just how short the expected lifespan of some building elements is, especially the mechanical and electrical installations. In most multi-unit developments (MUDs), the services installations are usually relatively straightforward. But items like fire alarms, emergency lighting, lifts, water storage tanks and booster pumps reach life expectancy quickly (some within 15-20 years after installation). Roof coverings, windows and external fabric should perform better but capital cost of replacement can be great. There comes a point when the cost of maintenance becomes unsustainable. The fact that many building elements have similar lifespans and require replacement at the same time means an added strain on resources.

We can predict with some certainty that there will be a high demand for capital expenditure at year 25 of a building's life and we can accurately estimate this cost. We can then also determine just how much we need to set aside each year so that the expenditure can be managed.

The problem that has existed in the past, and one that the now 10-year-old MUD Act initially set out to address, was that most owners' management companies (OMCs) were not setting aside adequate amounts to cover future capital expenditure costs. Their immediate issue at the time of having to deal with funding repairs to legacy defects arising from the building boom, including improving fire precautions, didn't help, and left apartment owners resistant to what they felt was throwing good money after bad. Saving is a habit, and unless taught early, it's a hard one to acquire. Most of us like to spend now and tomorrow will look after itself. Dipping into sinking funds for routine maintenance and defect repairs defeated the purpose of the funds.

#### Impact on value

Sinking funds can also have an impact on the value of an apartment. If a sinking fund is not well resourced then a potential purchaser is likely to be faced with increased contributions to cover the 'lost years' when little or no contributions were made to the fund. If a substantial capital expenditure project is proposed at, say, year 25, and the pot is empty at year 20, then you can see the issue. If such a property was being sold, should the equivalent of 20 years of contributions be deducted from the market value? This sounds plausible in theory but in practice most people look beyond this reality when buying an apartment property. The shrewd investor may look differently, however, and will establish if any capital expenditure is proposed and what level of funding is in place or will need to be levied on owners. The necessary adjustment would be made to the purchase price.

**DISPOSAL OF WASTE AND DEBRIS NEEDS TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR AND, IN SOME CASES, YOU NEED TO ADD THE COST OF DEALING WITH ASBESTOS-CONTAINING MATERIALS (ACMS).**

### Complex and costly

We recently assisted an OMC in managing the replacement of large roof-mounted water storage tanks. The tanks were old and corroded, and well beyond their serviceable life. Our design risk assessment had identified that removal of the tank required working in a confined space in a very small water tank room on a high flat roof.

The working methods and programme would need to adapt to these restrictions. The temporary replacement tank would also need to be sited at roof level and at a location that would not inhibit the removal and replacement of the existing tank.

The loading placed on the flat roof by the temporary tank had to be taken into consideration.

A metal support platform and temporary propping below had to be designed by a structural engineer. The cost of providing temporary parking spaces, staging areas and cranes significantly inflated the overall contract sum.

Similar ancillary costs can arise for replacement of lift installations, roof recovering, fire alarm and emergency lighting updates, and the like.

Disposal of waste and debris needs to be accounted for and, in some cases, you need to add the cost of dealing with asbestos-containing materials (ACMs). The cost of replacement is much greater than the initial installation cost.

A building investment fund based on the original installation cost would fall well short of what's required in reality. That's why, in my view, the assessment of work required and the preparation of a building investment fund projection needs to be undertaken by a skilled practitioner.

The Chartered Building Surveyor, with knowledge of materials, lifecycle and replacement costs, but also an understanding of the logistical challenges posed when refurbishment or replacement is needed, is best placed to offer this advice.

Our experience and knowledge of working with the built environment allows a certain reliability when making budget projections.

The farmer who returns to the harvest field following a long tending season, or the child delighted with the balance in their post office savings book, are good role models for the apartment owner.

The habit of small regular investment amounting to a desired level in time makes unwelcome levies unnecessary but also helps to maintain your investment and the property in good condition.

**Money grows on the tree of patience.**

**MODULE GROUP**

**Andrew Ramsey:** 087 125 9386 / [andrew@modulegroup.ie](mailto:andrew@modulegroup.ie)  
**Shane Hynes:** 086 012 6820 / [shane@modulegroup.ie](mailto:shane@modulegroup.ie)

**Building investment fund analysis**

**Defect diagnosis**

**Reinstatement cost assessment**

# COMMITTEE REMODELLING

BERNADETTE MORRISSEY WAS ELECTED CHAIR OF SCSi NEXUS IN 2020, AND TALKS ABOUT HER WORK WITH THE COMMITTEE AND HER OWN PROFESSIONAL CAREER.

**B**ernadette's eye fell on surveying after originally doing a degree in commerce. Following a master's in quantity surveying in the UK, she started working in London for J. Murphy and Sons in the company's tunnels division, which involved working on the Crossrail project's C310 tunnel, an extension to a London Underground tunnel.

Since moving home, she has worked for PJ Hegarty and Sons and says a typical workday involves interacting with the site team: "The project managers, the engineers, interacting with the client team, again quantity surveyors, engineers, project managers. I would spend a good amount of my time dealing with subcontractors".

## SCSi Nexus

Bernadette served as Chair of SCSi Nexus from August 2020 to June 2021. Formerly known as the YSCSi, the committee changed its name to better reflect the cohort of people entering surveying. Having originally trained in another field, Bernadette knows that new surveyors do not all come into the profession at 21 or 22 years of age: "Typically, what you find a lot with surveying is that people might get into it as a

secondary career choice. They might have started out doing something else and then moved into surveying. Professionals at the early stage of their career might not be young. From a within the profession point of view, we feel the Nexus committee is the stepping stone for professionals at the early stages of their career into the SCSi".

The committee is known for holding many social events. Although these could not take place during the pandemic, Bernadette and Nexus have kept themselves busy: "We contribute to SCSi initiatives, such as our mental health awareness survey. We're going to be starting a surveyors' competition called Innovation for our Future in the summer. We are in the process of developing a Transition Year booklet to encourage secondary school students to take up surveying as a profession. Within that we are trying to promote equality and diversity by publishing photos of male and female surveyors doing their day-to-day work". The work of Bernadette and Nexus has been more formal during this period, but no less important: "It has been a very different year for the committee in that we've focused on more paper-based SCSi contributions, which has been a positive thing for the committee, in that our reputation now extends beyond social activities and we hope that we're able to contribute to the SCSi in a more formal way, as well as getting back to social activities when normality resumes".



Bernadette Morrissey originally completed a degree in commerce before pursuing a career as a quantity surveyor.

## Equality

Bernadette would like to see Nexus continue and do more in its work in encouraging students into surveying, especially women: "We have an active part to play in speaking to schools and representing ourselves at events that will encourage teenagers and kids to see that surveying is a profession they might be interested in. I like to think myself that if you can see it, you can be it, so particularly from a young female perspective, I'd be very passionate about equality and diversity, and encouraging more females into the industry". Bernadette has plans to engage different kinds of media to show women in the surveying workplace: "Hopefully in the future, we can put some short videos together to give a snapshot of say, Bernie who's a QS, or Susan who's a property surveyor, or Jennifer who's a building surveyor".

## SURVEYOR PROFILE

Colm Quinn  
Journalist and Sub-Editor,  
Think Media



# LIFE OF PII

THERE IS DIFFICULTY WITH THE ISSUES AND COSTS MEMBERS FACE IN ACCESSING PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE.

**A**s a practitioner and business owner, I am only too aware of the issue, and cost, of achieving adequate professional indemnity insurance (PII) cover at present. From our central role in the Construction Industry Council (CIC), which I currently chair, and other groups, we know we are not alone in this respect and it is a major issue for all professionals as well as main contractors and specialist subcontractors. While I was President of the Society, I received many calls on this issue and continue to do so. We have engaged with the insurance industry extensively and it would appear that the issue is not likely to recede in the immediate future. They advise us the issue primarily relates to supply and demand as a number of underwriters have simply exited the market. In addition, there are undoubtedly concerns to limit fire safety exposure for obvious reasons and legacy matters relating to valuations claims.

This has resulted in major difficulties for members across a number of professional groups in terms of significant increases in premium costs, despite practitioners frequently having had no previous claims. They are also having difficulties in achieving the type of cover they require – for example, cover for “each and every claim” as opposed to “in the aggregate” and indeed the limit of cover they require.

## Working with the OGP

In addition to engaging with the insurance industry, we have also engaged with Government and in particular the Office of Government Procurement (OGP). For their part, the OGP has also engaged extensively with our industry, the insurance industry and the State Claims Agency.

In our most recent meeting with the OGP, it is clear that they have recognised this as a significant issue for the industry and are actively reviewing a range of potential measures (if not solutions) that may assist industry in continuing to provide services to public sector clients.

We have recently made a submission to them in relation to the flexibility they will need to provide on public sector projects, including a detailed review of “Liability caps” which has been an issue for practitioners for many years. However, while the public sector is looking at measures as to how to deal with this issue and potential solutions, it now behoves us to outline to the private sector the issues that are being encountered.

These include, in particular, client bodies, funders and indeed the legal profession and that will form part of our engagement moving forward. As part of this process, the

Society has recently conducted a tender process for a PII partner. This process has now been completed and we look forward to working with our chosen partner, Glennon Insurance, towards educating members in relation to PII and engaging extensively with industry and other stakeholders in the immediate future.

Let me be clear, our engagement may not lead to reduced premia for members. However, it is our hope that this engagement will mean that members will have a forum to review their specific issues associated with PII and ensure that they are putting their best foot forward whilst endeavouring to secure their required PII cover.

As always, your input and sharing of issues is always welcome so please feel free to reach out to me or the Executive team with regard to any issue. Feedback is absolutely critical to all we do.

## THE LAST WORD

Micheál Mahon  
Immediate Past President



# PROPERTY IN THE IRISH TIMES

**RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY**

**Residential Property**  
myhome.ie

**Stud farm returns with €11.5m**

Ballydoon Stud, a six-bed Georgian house on 127 acres close to Enniskerry, was bought by €7m during the boom, significantly overpaid and following attempts to sell for €2.5m in 2008, it's back asking €11.5m

**COMMERCIAL PROPERTY**

**Commercial Property**

**The Square Tallaght on offer for €22m**

Shopping centre's second expansion with a total of 157,000 sq ft. Buyer is expected to come from a financial institution investment fund.

**ART, ANTIQUES & COLLECTING**

**Paul Henry's original 'W'**

Artist's view of Ireland in scope through Commission to the world

**HOME & DESIGN**

**Home & Design**

**Ireland's Houses of the Year**

The 20th Annual RIBA Awards celebrate the best of architecture today. At last night's event the winners of one of the most eagerly-awaited categories, House of the Year, revealed designs ranging from an original house in Funchigh to a transformed stone farmhouse in Kildenny



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