

Jayne's new role is 'a real honour'

A PRESTIGIOUS property organisation has appointed its first female president in its 65-year history.

Jayne Rixon took over the post at the Bristol Property Agents Association dinner last week from Andrew Batchelor.

Mrs Rixon has worked for Burston Cook for the last 14 years and specialises in office agency work.

She said she was thrilled to be the first woman to be appointed to the post and is already looking forward to a busy year.

The chartered surveyor said: "This a real honour for me. When I first started working I was one of the only women in the field but there are more and more coming through."

"It was never really a job that appealed to women because of its image."

She added: "I really love what I do because it is so varied and every day you get to do something different and meet new people."

She added: "It is tough at the moment but what makes Bristol such a great place to work is the camaraderie in the property business."

"There is no other city like Bristol when it comes to people supporting one another and working together. I would not want to live and work anywhere else."



'Thrilled': Outgoing president Andrew Batchelor of Hartnell Taylor Cook hands over to Jayne Rixon

Insolvency specialist to open city office

ONE of the UK's leading corporate recovery, insolvency and restructuring specialists is opening a new office in Bristol.

Leonard Curtis, an independent practice which has more than 100 staff, is targeting the South West.

The firm's office in Queen Square is being headed up by Colin Prescott, an insolvency expert with more than 25 years of experience.

Leonard Curtis specialises in offering strategic advice to struggling companies.

The firm also has a separate turnaround division, LC Corporate Strategies.

Mr Prescott said the new office in Bristol was "an exciting new chapter" for the company.

He said: "The move makes perfect business sense because it means we now have an excellent geographical spread and an opportunity to grow the Leonard Curtis brand."

"My own background is in insolvency but with the assistance of the LC Corporate Strategies team, we will be able to offer clients a full range of financial assistance packages."

"We know these are very challenging times for businesses but we have the knowledge and skills needed to ensure that business owners don't just survive but thrive in this tough financial climate. With help there are solutions to almost any problem."

Signs of recovery as report reveals demand is on the up

THE commercial property market in Bristol is showing encouraging signs of recovery following the lows of the last two years, according to a new report.

Property consultant Alder King has come up with some optimistic findings in its annual Market Monitor for the South West and Bristol.

The report analysed the commercial property market in Bristol over the last 12 months along with other key regional cities and towns across the South West of England.

According to the findings of the report, Cabot Circus has continued to dominate Bristol's city centre retail offering.

The centre has recently added Quiz Clothing and Scribbler which means that occupancy levels are now at 97 per cent.

Michael Ribbeck
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As reported in the *Evening Post*, the new firms will shortly be joined by Foyles, who are due to open their first book store outside of London.

Rents in the city centre for shop units have remained steady at £310 per square foot while out-of-town rents have steadily increased.

The leisure business at Cabot Circus has been a huge success and is currently oversubscribed.

Charles Russell-Smith, a partner at Alder King, said: "Cabot Circus continues to be the main retail and leisure destination in the city centre and continues to attract new retailers to the city."

"The recent sale of the Galleries and Union Gate will also lead to new investment in those areas of Broadmead, which

have previously suffered from the 'Cabot effect'."

He added: "Out of town, Brookmaker has achieved lettings to Peacocks, Poundstretcher and Boots at the Willow Brook Centre in Bradley Stoke and only one retail warehouse unit now remains available at the scheme, which we expect will soon be let."

Industrial take-up was up on the 2009 figure, with the availability of good quality space becoming a major issue towards the end of the year.

The largest single transaction involved W H Malcolm's acquisition of the 246,000 sq ft former Focus retail unit at the G Park, Avonmouth.

Meanwhile, the office sector in 2010 saw an upturn in demand in both the city centre and north Bristol markets.

Overall take-up was approximately 44 per cent up on the level recorded in 2009. Now

less than 300,000 sq ft (27,871 square metres) of new Grade A specification accommodation is available in central Bristol and 105,000 sq ft in north Bristol.

Some of this space is already under offer with only one new building at Finzels Reach in the city centre currently under construction.

A spokesman said: "The last year saw an upturn in demand in both the city and north Bristol."

"Overall take-up was approximately 44 per cent up on the low levels recorded in 2009."

"Take-up was spread amongst a wide range of sectors including, in particular, the financial services, professional and service sectors."

"An increased proportion of demand during the year was focussed on new Grade A accommodation with a number of occupiers trading up in terms of quality as a consequence of enhanced incentive packages."

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A commanding presence

Rugby star Martin Bayfield brings wit to the BPAA's annual dinner in Bristol



Outgoing BPAA president Andrew Batchelor and incoming president Jayne Rixon

Tales of camaraderie, punch-ups and heroism on the rugby pitch featured at last week's annual Bristol Property Agents Association annual dinner in Bristol, where former England international Martin Bayfield entertained the 500 or so guests, and Jayne Rixon took over from Andrew Batchelor as president of the association.

As a forward for England, Bayfield (pictured right) won 31 caps and played in the 1995 Rugby World Cup squad in South Africa. And at 6' 10" and weighing 20 stone, his physical presence provides him with another dimension to his career: that of body double for actor Robbie Coltrane, who plays Hagrid the giant in the Harry Potter films.

Bayfield, who was Batchelor's choice as guest speaker, also revealed himself as a dab hand at accents on the evening, with Ireland, Wales, New Zealand and Yorkshire in his linguistic repertoire.

More than 500 guests attended the BPAA annual dinner at The Grand Hotel in Bristol

Following Bayfield's anecdotes, outgoing BPAA president Batchelor delivered his final speech and handed over the chain of office to Jayne Rixon, who will be the first woman president in the association's 65 years. As Batchelor pointed out, women got the vote in 1918, Margaret Thatcher became the first woman prime minister in 1979 and the final frontier, BPAA president, has now been reached.

We wonder who Rixon will choose for her speaker at next year's annual dinner.



A magician entertains guests over cocktails



Jerry Burton of GVA and Simon Harvey of Hartnell Taylor Cook exchange gossip



David Skinner (left) talks to Mark Stupples and Ned Cussen, both from King Sturge

Commercial Property

THORNBURY

Offers invited
Agents: Alder King, 0117 317 1000

A high profile office building has reached the market in Thornbury.

Alder King Property Consultants has been appointed to sell Alexandra House, a detached modern office building extending to 30,748sq ft (2,857sq m) on a site of 2.95 acres.

It has on-site canteen facilities and an extensive on-site car park providing 198 spaces.

The property is also prominently located fronting Midland Way, a main arterial route to the south of Thornbury.

Thomas Dugay, surveyor at Alder King, said: "This is a great opportunity for an organisation to buy a freehold headquarters building in an established commercial area of Thornbury.

"The building is arranged as open-plan office space, with some partitioned office areas.

"We think it will suit a wide range of businesses, looking to purchase cost-efficient premises outside of Bristol.



NEWS

First woman president



Jayne Rixon has become the Bristol Property Agents' Association's first woman president in its 65-year history.

She officially took over last Thursday evening at the BPAA's annual dinner, which was attended by 528 people.

Jayne, pictured, is partner at Burston Cook commercial property agents.

She takes over from Andrew Batchelor, of Hartnell Taylor Cook.

Jayne, a qualified chartered

surveyor, has been involved with the city's property market for 18 years and at Burston Cook for 14 years.

She was on the committee of the BPAA for three years before being asked to become a junior vice-president in 2009 and then senior vice-president in 2010.

She was south-west chairman of the Association of Women in Property in 2002.

Jayne said she was honoured to be asked to stand as president.