

Newsletter

Winter 2020



2020



Well, where do I start! It is safe to say that the first nine months of my Presidency have not been quite what I expected... Less than six weeks into my term as the President of the Association we entered lockdown! I am not going to try and summarise the various and differing experiences we have all had of this unprecedented time except to say that I hope that your families and friends are safe and well. We are looking forward to the festive period followed, I hope, by a return to a more normal and productive working life in 2021.

I suspect like many of you, I found that the lockdown period was one of the busiest of my career as I juggled home working with home schooling alongside participation in a varied and fascinating range of public sector Zoom and Teams calls as part of the BPAA's participation in the local response. In this respect I would like to extend my thanks to the Immediate Past President, Paul Baker, without whom I would have been unable to field as many of the activities that we have been asked to contribute to and whose expertise in the arena of planning and development has been invaluable to both our Association and the public sector participants involved in our activities. More of that in the rest of this newsletter.

One of the great achievements of the Association over past years has been to raise significant funds for charitable causes and clearly this has been seriously impacted during my year in office. As a consequence, the decision has been taken by the Committee in conjunction with the BPAA Past Presidents to extend my term in office by 12 months, deferring all Committee changes by the same period. I am very grateful to the Committee for taking this decision as are my nominated charities, The Soil Association and Southmead Hospital, both of whom have been notified and will be actively supporting our events through the 2021/22 Presidential Year.

I thank you for your continuing support of the BPAA and will endeavour to carry on my work on behalf of the property industry in the City over the course of the coming year. I wish you all the best for Christmas and the New Year.

Chris Grazier – President (chris.grazier@htc.uk.com)

UWE

For several years the BPAA has sought to support and encourage students participating in real estate courses at the University of the West of England and to forge stronger links with the University that has produced so many of our members from students who have remained in our City. In order to encourage academic excellence and with an eye to retaining talent in the City, we have sponsored prizes for both a Final Year Undergraduate and for a student graduating from the Masters course.



We are delighted to announce that this year's awards are to be made to **Annily Skye-Jeffries** in the **Undergraduate Award** category, who impressed the judging panel with her evident dedication to not only the course, but also a future career in Bristol with the Valuation Office Agency. In the **Masters Award** category we selected **Kate Robertson** who demonstrated a real passion for the property industry and through exceptionally hard work had achieved a high level of academic success. We have no doubt that she will go on to make a significant contribution to the property market.

Public Sector Engagement on a Covid-19 Response

I have alluded to it above, but I have been impressed by the level of effort that has been put in by our various Local Authority teams across the City region and I have been keen to ensure that the Association is involved where relevant in the important decisions being taken.

To those not involved, it is often not immediately apparent that this public sector engagement work is being undertaken so I would like to extend my thanks to those members who have been kind enough to lend us their expertise and time in attending the many online forums and meetings that have taken place over the past year.

We are ensuring that we remain connected to the various teams coordinating activity in the City region and I'm happy to assist members with specific questions. We are also building on our strong relationship with Business West to ensure that our voice is heard in all of the relevant areas. I have outlined overleaf some of the public sector engagement we have been involved with.

West of England Combined Authority

Paul Baker and I were both invited to take part in the WECA Economic Recovery Taskforce formed during the early stages of the first Lockdown. This was co-ordinated by our guest speakers at BPAA and WIP Seminar held earlier in the autumn which outlined the findings of the Economic Taskforce and the strategy that it has recommend. Those findings are set out here:



<https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/west-of-england-regional-recovery-taskforce-our-recovery-plan/>

WECA's importance as the regional authority is increasing and we have made strides this year in our general engagement with them. We have secured input into various policy groups that they have formed including the liaison undertaken by members active in the Retail, Office and Industrial sectors with the WECA Inward Investment teams.

The longstanding Planning Liaison Committee work that we have undertaken with Bristol City Council has been extended to South Gloucestershire and is proposed with WECA. This work will be increasingly important over the coming years as limited resources and emerging Local Plan Policies develop. WECA have appointed Atkins to prepare the Employment Land Spatial Needs Assessment and the BPAA have been asked to contribute to their study as a primary contributor with sub-groups to be arranged focusing on the specific employment sectors affected. I will be in contact with individual members in respect of this but welcome any thoughts you may have and would like us to relay to the team involved.

Bristol City Council

Over the past 6 months the BPAA has worked closely with the teams at Bristol City Council involved in City Recovery, together with maintaining a high level of presence on Advisory Boards.

I have been hosting a series of monthly Zoom calls with key members of the Property, Planning and City Divisions of the Council with each call focusing on different sectors of the property market. The feedback we have had from the City Council has been extremely positive and the wide ranging and often challenging calls have clearly affected wider policy decisions.



Paul Baker has represented the Association on both the One City and Western Harbour Boards, making significant contributions on behalf of the property industry in the City.

There are a number of further policy areas developing which we are closely monitoring and becoming involved where appropriate. These include the following:

- Retail Study – Bristol City Council have commissioned a retail study for the city centre and the Association will be providing expert input into this through our membership.
- Transport and Road Closures – significant changes have been introduced in the city centre and we are working with Business West to monitor the impact on the city centre and make representations where necessary.
- Local Employment Land Study – Bristol City Council have commissioned but not released their Employment Land Study, we are pushing them to do so and will make representations once published if required.
- Bristol Avon Flood Strategy – The planning liaison group have received a presentation on the proposed flood strategy for the city which will have far reaching implications for many of the waterside locations in the city centre.

South Gloucestershire Council

As Paul correctly identified during his Presidential year, we have perhaps overlooked our engagement with South Gloucestershire County Council in the past and I have been keen to build on the steps that Paul implemented last year.

Whilst many of their activities were paused during the Lockdown period these are now coming back to life and we recently held a Planning Liaison Committee during which we agreed to hold a more general market update to Officers in the new year that will capture some of the activity undertaken in their area during the preceding 12 months.

South Gloucestershire Council have also commissioned Atkins to develop their Employment Land Study and the Association is being a consulted as part of that process alongside Business West with whom we have submitted joint representations.



Networking and Social Events

It's traditional in this mid-term update to outline to you the wide range of social events and CPD events we have delivered. I regret to say that the count so far is zero! However, we have a series of CPD events planned with our various sponsorship partners which will hopefully begin a level of activity. These will be delivered free of charge to all members.

Due to the uncertainty surrounding the ability to host large-scale events we will not be holding our Annual Dinner in February 2021, and we have made the decision to postpone all social events to Spring of next year. We then hope to start with the Annual Cyclosporitif, currently scheduled for April, and a joint drinks event with the Committee of the Women in Property organisation. I look forward to seeing many of you at those and other events over the course of next year, but we will continue to review our calendar in accordance with Government guidance.



Charity

It has become a tradition for the money raised at the various events organised throughout the year to go to a charity or organisation chosen by the President.

The charities I have chosen to support are:



The Soil Association have been based in Bristol since 1946 and are leading educators and campaigners in the worlds of Food, Farming and Forestry. In a world likely to be increasingly influenced by climate change their work has become particularly important.



I chose to support the Southmead Hospital Charity to aid their Alzheimer's research work. Over the past year their need greatly increased as they have launched numerous initiatives to support the NHS staff working at Southmead Hospital during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Past Members

I'm sorry to say that I have been informed that Alan Wood has passed away after losing his battle with cancer. I'm sure you will join me in passing on our condolences to his wife Carol and their two children. Alan was a Licenced and Leisure valuer and one of the founding partners of Moore Wood and Cochram.

Housekeeping

Membership subscription renewals are now due if you have not already paid them. These can be paid via our online membership/subs portal. I am sure we are all keeping a close eye on business costs in the current market and the BPAA has always maintained its membership costs at a very competitive rate compared to similar organisations. In light of the current economic and market situation we have held membership prices at the same level as last year.

The Committee and wider membership are working hard on behalf of the property industry in the City and I want to ensure that we are in a position to continue to support this work financially where required over the next 12 months, as you will have seen above, many significant decisions are likely to be taken during this difficult period that will affect all of us in our working lives over the years to come.

The quickest and easiest way to log into your membership account is to follow these steps:

- (1) Load the BPAA webpage <http://www.bpaa.net/membership> and click on the membership tab
- (2) Fill in the 'Sign in' information OR
- (3) If you have not previously set a password or have forgotten it, click on 'Reset my password' in the bottom left-hand side of the screen and enter your email address to generate a new password

Once you have logged in click on the 'Manage/renew my subscriptions' link, select your outstanding membership ending 30 Apr 2020 and add to basket, then go to 'Checkout' to select payment method. If you select 'Pay by cheque', it will provide you with address details to send this to at the point the sale. If you experience problems, please contact the membership secretary on membership@bpaa.net