



Tuesday 3rd March 2008

Women in Property a force to be reckoned with says Association's new national Chairman

The Association of Women in Property has become a force to be reckoned with says Maria Francké in her role as the Association's new national Chairman. Maria Francké, Head of Planning and Development, Scotland at Drivers Jonas, takes the position from 1st March 2008 in this, Women in Property's 21st year.

"There is an impressive range of talent, enthusiasm and professionalism among our membership yet, for a while now, we have been something of a sleeping giant" said Maria.

"We're now seeing a real step-change, particularly as a result of activity last year when we launched our National Student Awards, bringing into focus the career potential for girls in the industry."

The Women in Property Student Awards scheme was launched in 2007 to encourage and inspire young women studying built environment degree courses and raise awareness among their potential employers, of the wealth of talent coming into property. The inaugural Awards were highly acclaimed with some of the best known names in the industry backing them, including Argent, Cushman & Wakefield, HBOS plc, Jones Lang LaSalle, Mace, Pascall & Watson and Davis Langdon.

"The Awards scheme is well underway this year and we are absolutely confident that it will become 'mainstream' within the industry. As an organisation, our ethos is to support and nurture women across all property disciplines.

“We want all employers to recognise this and understand the very real value in doing the same. With skills shortages across the board and yet with women representing only fifteen per cent of the industry, it makes good business sense” said Maria.

Women in Property has, for some years, led by example. For instance, the organisation runs a comprehensive Road Show programme which takes property professionals into schools across the country, to explain more about the different career options available.

A mentoring programme is also available; members of Women in Property are trained as mentors and ‘matched’ with suitable mentees, allowing young women in the early stages of their careers to seek guidance and inspiration from women already highly experienced in their sectors.

“One of the messages I want to get across to business in my year as National Chairman, is the tremendous value of ‘real life’ experience for students from school age upwards” said Maria.

“We’d like to see more professionals taking time to guest-lecture or simply share their wisdom in schools and colleges. It will benefit both sides in many ways, not just from the CSR perspective but, with a hard-nosed business eye, will ultimately generate future employees who are more work- and streetwise from the moment they step through the office door.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

The Association of Women In Property

Women in Property is a national organisation which last year celebrated its 20th birthday. With over 1,500 members and 12 regional branches it represents all disciplines within the property and construction industry and provides a forum for business opportunities, the exchanging of views, networking and personal development.

Maria Francke

Maria Francké joined Drivers Jonas in August 1999 as Head of Planning for Scotland. She has sixteen years experience in private sector planning and management consultancy work. She

specialises in commercial property and advises public and private sector clients on the development potential of land and building portfolios and the effects of public policy. As Planning Partner of the Scottish Practice she is responsible for the development of the planning business in Scotland and is actively involved in a wide range of regeneration, planning and economic consultancy work.

The Women in Property National Student Awards 2008

2008 marks the 2nd Women in Property National Student Awards. Launched in our 20th birthday year, the Awards raise awareness of careers in property and construction among young women. Open to second year female students studying a Built Environment course, Women in Property with the Construction Youth Trust has joined forces with Universities across the UK. Regional winners from nine branches will go forward to be judged at the 'Best of the Best' final in London in September, the winner receiving a cheque for £1,000 and a work placement.

Press enquiries:

Sue Maguire
Milestone PR
sue.maguire@milestonepr.co.uk
07739 403952