

# SURVEYORS

# JOURNAL

VOLUME 10

ISSUE 4

WINTER

2020

## DISCOVERING SPACE



SOCIETY OF  
**CHARTERED  
SURVEYORS**  
IRELAND

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

STATE OF SURVEYING

A CHANCE FOR CHANGE

DO WE VALUE SUSTAINABILITY?



**RICS**





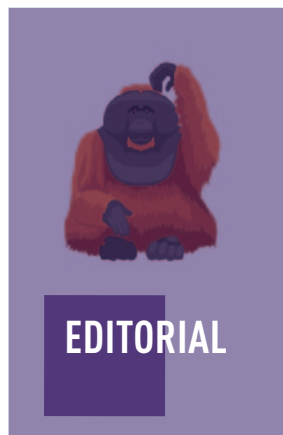
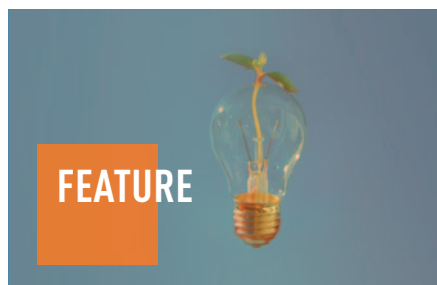
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# JOURNEYING TOWARDS PROGRESS

THIS HAS BEEN A YEAR NONE OF US COULD HAVE PREDICTED,  
BUT BETTER TIMES LIE AHEAD.

In preparing my notes for this article I took the opportunity to review our immediate Past President's message from December last year and I can only say "if we only knew then what we know now"! Johanna alluded to the conference and events being in full swing; at the time, Brexit and Budget 2020 were the primary concerns for the year ahead. Suffice to say, the world is a different place to what any of us imagined back then.

However, let's pause to consider some unlikely positives. Sure, our social calendar for November/early December is not what it normally is (my purchase of a new tux for my term of office is not looking like a good investment!) but we have all become more technologically adept and Covid-19, despite all the negative effects, has been without doubt the single biggest catalyst for change in how we conduct our business in our lifetime.

We have just had our first ever online national conference, something we would never have imagined just last year, we've rolled out CPD, and assessed more candidates than ever before, all while our staff are working from home. We are entering the age of digitisation, modern methods of construction, and virtual viewings and e-conveyancing. This is a hugely exciting time for surveyors in property and construction as we adapt to this change. However, it behoves us to remember the fragmented nature of our industry, with a huge proportion (by number) of businesses in property and construction being small/micro businesses. These businesses need to be encouraged and incentivised to make the digital and technological journey that is being mapped out, particularly in the Construction Sector Group Committee on Innovation.

For my part, as President and current Chairman of the Construction Industry Council, this is an area I will be monitoring closely in 2021 with a view to ensuring this journey is one all members can participate in.

Christmas can be a difficult time for some people at the best of times, whether due to financial pressures, loneliness or the sadness of losing family members or friends. During a global pandemic, many of those issues will undoubtedly be exacerbated. That is why we are urging members to 'stay connected', and to reach out to friends and colleagues whom you may not have heard from or spoken to in a while. That call, card or note might mean a lot more than you think.

It's been a challenging year and everyone deserves praise and a well-earned break for getting through it. The development of several vaccines is hugely positive and means we can look forward to better and brighter times in 2021.

Nollaig shona daoibh agus ní neart go chur le chéile.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Micheál Mahon  
President



## BRIGHT FUTURE

We are entering the age of digitisation, modern methods of construction, virtual viewings and e-conveyancing.



# A LOT LEARNED

COVID-19 HAS LED TO INNOVATION IN THE  
SURVEYING PROFESSION, WHICH WILL  
ENDURE INTO THE FUTURE.

**W**ith the end of the Covid-19 crisis thankfully coming into view, many of the pieces in this edition of the *Surveyors Journal* look to a more settled 2021 with an eye on the possible enduring effects of some of the changes all surveyors had to make in both their professional and private lives. In 'The state of surveying', the *Journal* spoke to the chairpersons of the Professional Groups and asked them how Covid-19 and other factors had affected their sector and their views on the outlook for 2021. My take from this was of a sense of resilience born of an innovative and confident use of modern technologies, embracing new ways of working and responding to clients. A lot has been learned and many changes to work practices have been welcomed and will endure, allowing most surveyors to offer their clients a better professional service in the future. As with all crises there has been opportunity, and surveyors have embraced new, and in some cases better, ways of working.

Another outcome of the pandemic is the heightened awareness of the quality of the air we breathe. Readers will be interested to hear of the contribution of John Macomber of Harvard Business School to what was a very successful online SCSi National Conference. John co-authored an interesting book on healthy buildings and commented on the long-term effects of Covid-19. He predicts that people are going to care much more about air quality when buying or renting property. I think he is very right about this and the effects of this awareness will affect property values in better times to come.

There is a brief note marking the passing of Tom Gavigan from Co. Meath. Tom was a thorough gentleman and a true professional with that important wider view of society, who made a significant contribution to the development of the IAVI. My sympathies to his family.

## EDITORIAL

Tom Dunne  
Editor



### Got milk?

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A vegan world **8** human lives  
could save million by 2050



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## PALMERSTON HOUSE REFURBISHMENT



As designers and project managers, The Building Consultancy has completed the refurbishment of Palmerston House, Fenian Street, Dublin 2. The five-storey office block was first constructed in the 1970s. The new refurbishment involved refurbished office floors, common areas and reception. The company states: "We were delighted to have been involved in bringing a new lease of life to this property in the centre of Dublin city".

## LIONHEART – VITAL SUPPORTS FOR SURVEYORS

Christmas can be a difficult time for some. Given the year we've had it's likely more people may find it a challenge this year. If you or a colleague are encountering difficulties it might be useful to reach out to Lionheart, the only charity dedicated to supporting Chartered Surveyors, past and present, and their families. The range of services available to members includes financial support, health and well-being packages, free professional counselling, work-related support and legal advice, as well as help if members or their loved ones become seriously ill.

Lionheart counsellors are specially trained in delivering therapy sessions online but since the onset of Covid-19 they have also begun offering support to clients via secure email and messaging services. For anyone encountering difficulties securing employment, LionHeart has a 'Back to Work' programme, which provides personalised career coaching from specialist advisers.

LionHeart is supported by the donations of members, although that's not a requirement to use the service. If you'd like a local referral to the LionHeart service, contact [lionheart@scsi.ie](mailto:lionheart@scsi.ie). All queries are confidential and nothing is kept on file. You can request to talk to an SCSi member who is a local representative, as well as to the LionHeart professional staff. Alternatively, you can contact their helpline directly at 0044 121 289 3300 or email [info@lionheart.org.uk](mailto:info@lionheart.org.uk).

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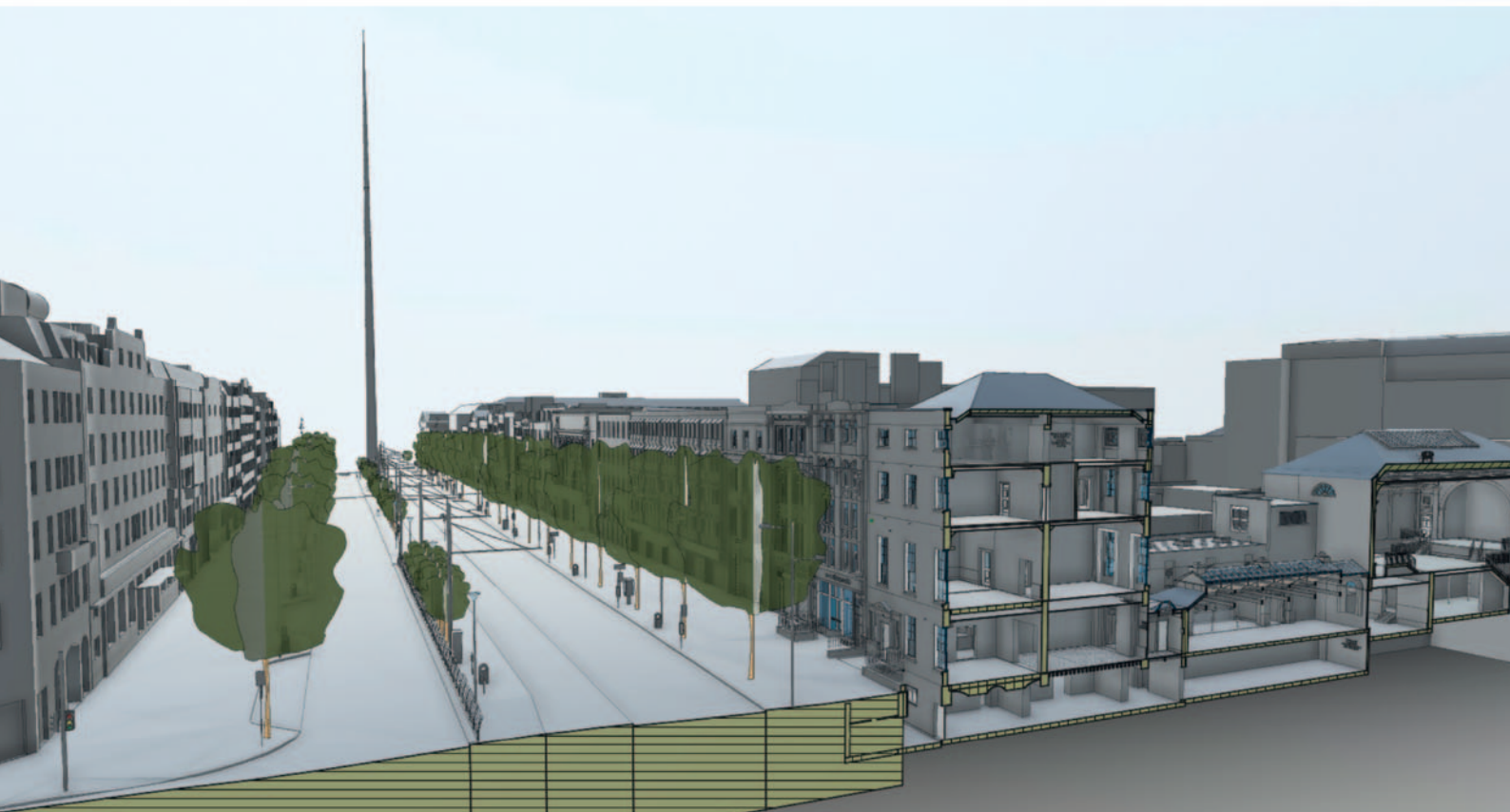
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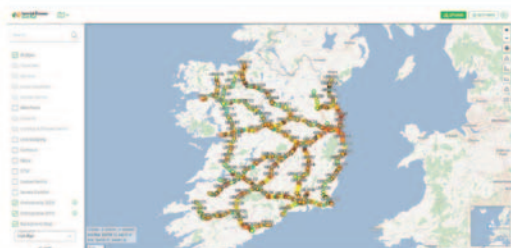
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## SCSI AND RIAI TO TRAIN PUBLIC SERVANTS

The Minister of State with responsibility for Public Procurement, Ossian Smyth TD, recently announced the appointment of a consortium of the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) and the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI) to provide specialist training to public servants engaged in the delivery of the National Development Plan.

The training will be provided through the Office of Government Procurement's Commercial Skills Academy and is the latest in a range of measures that the Government is introducing to support the work of the public service in delivering publicly funded projects.

The RIAI/SCSI appointment follows a competitive process and will deliver entry-level training aimed at providing a comprehensive overview of the delivery process and contract management.

Welcoming the move, SCSI CEO Shirley Coulter said this was the first time the Society and the RIAI had partnered to provide training: "We are confident that the collaborative approach will ensure the best outcome for learners. This is an excellent initiative from the Commercial Skills Academy group within the Office of Government Procurement and we look forward to providing public servants with the commercial skills training they need to deliver key public capital investment projects such as those set out in the National Development Plan".



# Goodbye 2020!

Thanks to all our clients for the work in one of the most difficult years we've known, we look forward to a brighter 2021

#staysafe #thankyou #vaccine #permaculture  
#buildingsurveying #dilapidations #freegan

**mcgovern**  
surveyors

## OBITUARY - TOM GAVIGAN



On October 10, we sadly lost one of our longest-serving members, Tom Gavigan, who died peacefully at home, aged 86, surrounded by his family.

Tom was President of the Irish Auctioneers and Valuers Institute (IAVI) in 1985. For 60 years he ran T&J Gavigan Auctioneers, which was founded by his father Tom and uncle John in 1940. He had an innate business sense, loved dealing

with people, and had many loyal colleagues in both the property business and the horse racing world.

Tom held dear his time on many committees in the IAVI. He was forever grateful for the support he received from the team at the time, namely Joe Healy, Clíodhna O'Donoghue, Julie Creedon and Valerie Bourke.

Through his work, Tom and his wife Marie travelled abroad to many conferences. On one such trip to Barcelona, Tom spent a pleasant afternoon at a poolside lounge with probably the most famous footballer in the world at the time, David Beckham. It remains a secret what both

men discussed over the afternoon but we hear that David Beckham got an insider's track on Meath Gaelic Football!

Tom loved his sport and played on many championship-winning teams. He loved National Hunt racing, and together with old school friend and trainer Paddy Osborne, had many successes. He was passionate about Meath football and was proud to have attended all seven All-Ireland wins from 1949 to 1999. He also loved supporting Irish rugby.

On his first day working in Navan, he met Pat Fitzsimons, who had been a comrade of his father's in the War of Independence. This resulted in a completely unexpected surprise for Tom. He fell for Pat's daughter, Marie, who was to be his lifelong love and wife of 61 years.

Family was everything to Tom. He was a wonderful father to his six children Tom, Grainne, Orla, Michael, Cara and Eimer. He enjoyed nothing more than spending time with his 16 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

An expression Tom often used was "help if you can" and he was involved in many community organisations including Navan Lions Club and Kells Chamber of Commerce.

May he rest in peace.



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## SOCIETY TO PUBLISH PROPERTY HANDBOOK FOR MEMBERS

The delivery of professional services within the property sector has evolved significantly in recent years, and as professionals working in this sector, members have had to alter their approach to react to the changing needs of clients, customers and buildings. The SCSi has utilised the expertise of our surveying experts to benefit those working within the property sector through the SCSi Property Handbook. The Property Handbook is a comprehensive guidance note that provides relevant, up-to-date information to members as new guidance, regulation and legislation comes into force. This guidance note includes 13 chapters providing up-to-date information across a wide range of professional services such as: property sales procedures; building surveys; agency and auction technology; rent reviews; compulsory purchase orders (CPOs); valuations; forestry; Part V negotiations; and, taxation. Those working within the property sales, rental, acquisition, and management sectors are encouraged to refer to this SCSi guidance note to ensure, as far as possible, that they are following best practice in the delivery of services to clients.

This handbook is available in a hardback ring-bound booklet and can be purchased on the SCSi online store. It is available free to members if you choose to utilise this as your complimentary option, as highlighted within your membership subscription letter. This also includes the option to purchase a second handbook at one-third discount and free attendance to our Property Handbook launch event (spring 2021).

Please see our website for further details and for pre-ordering your Property Handbook for 2021.

If you have any queries regarding the Property Handbook, please contact [katie@scsi.ie](mailto:katie@scsi.ie).

## SCSi IN PRINT, ON RADIO AND ON TV

Some high-profile media coverage definitely added to the air of excitement around this year's national conference. Prior to speaking at the event, one of the key speakers, Dr Rory Hearne from Maynooth University, shared his thoughts on solutions to the housing crisis in an opinion piece in *The Irish Times*. In the article Dr Hearne, who's book *Housing Shock* was published earlier in the year, outlined the role he believes cost rental can play in helping to solve the supply side crisis. Later in the day it was the turn of another speaker, Prof. John Macomber from Harvard Business School, to articulate his views on the importance of healthy buildings, this time on radio to Sarah McNerney, co-presenter on RTÉ Radio 1's *Drivetime* programme. Prof. Macomber explained how the focus on creating energy-efficient 'tight' buildings has led to a deterioration in air quality in our buildings, both residential and commercial. Sarah McNerney was quick to point out that if buildings are to have more clean fresh air, this will lead to increased energy consumption.

The day after the conference, Chartered Building Surveyor Kevin Hollingsworth – who is Chair of the SCSi Membership and Public Affairs Committee – was interviewed on the issue of overcrowding in rental accommodation by RTÉ's *Prime Time Investigates* programme. The programme, which was entitled 'Accommodating Covid', went undercover to look at the harsh reality of life for tenants forced to live in overcrowded conditions where social distancing and self-isolation are virtually impossible. Kevin was one of a handful of experts asked to give their expert views on the footage of the dangerously overcrowded conditions.

## WHO'S WHO IN YSCSi



Bernadette Morrissey (left) is looking forward to a busy and challenging year in her role as Chair of the YSCSi, but she knows she will be able to rely on the support of a strong and pro-active committee. Bernadette, who is a Chartered Quantity Surveyor, has been an active member of the YSCSi for over four years. She previously held the

roles of Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chair, so it's fair to say she is familiar with the workings of the group. That experience will no doubt prove invaluable as she and the Committee continue to provide a voice for students, graduates and young surveyors within the Society. Bernadette, who is from Carlow and works with PJ Hegarty and Sons, is also the YSCSi representative for the Membership and Public Affairs Standing Committee.

Vice Chair Declan Magee has been a member of the YSCSi Committee for over seven years and has worked on various committees including the BIM Committee and the QS Professional Group. Declan is enthusiastic about the

education and development of surveyors, having completed a masters before taking up his role as part-time lecturer in TU Dublin and as an APC counsellor. A Senior Cost Consultant with Currie and Brown, Declan is a strong advocate on mental health issues and diversity within his company and across the surveying profession.

Catherine Greene, a new member of the YSCSi Committee, has taken on the role of Treasurer. Catherine, who is a Senior QS with Ardmac Ltd, is very passionate about promoting greater participation by women within the construction industry, as well as encouraging more young people to consider surveying as a career option.

Several other committee members have taken up key roles, including Noel Traynor (RICS Matrics Rep), Timothy Jordan (Events Rep), Kevin Leonard (Practice and Policy Standing Committee), and Susan McGinnell (Education and CPD Standing Committee). We wish Bernadette and all her hardworking YSCSi Committee members the very best for the year ahead.



## SCSI VISITS IRELAND'S FIRST NEW COST RENTAL SCHEME



### RESPONDING TO THE HOUSING CRISIS

From left: Seamus Duggan, MD, Duggan Brothers; Micheál Mahon, SCSI President; Claire Solon, SCSI; Michael Hamill, Respond Housing Association; and, Shirley Coulter, CEO, SCSI.

A delegation from the SCSI attended a meeting with Respond Housing Association and building contractors Duggan Brothers at their site near Stepside, Dublin. This is the first cost rental scheme in Ireland and is paving the way for the delivery of more affordable units to the market. The 150 apartments will provide 50 cost rental units and 100 much-needed social homes to families. It is expected that building work will conclude in mid-2021, with units being made available for rent shortly thereafter.



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General  
Christmas Cheer



Andrew, Shane and  
all at Module Group  
wish you a Merry  
Christmas!

# A BUILDING'S HEALTH IS ITS WEALTH

AFTER SPEAKING AT THE SCSi ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PROF. JOHN MACOMBER OF HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL SPOKE TO THE SURVEYORS JOURNAL ABOUT HEALTHY BUILDINGS, UNHEALTHY BUILDINGS AND HOW THE LATTER ARE GOING TO BE AT A DISTINCT COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE FROM NOW ON.



**A**fter decades working in the construction industry in Boston, John Macomber sold his company in 2006 and joined the faculty of Harvard Business School a year later to teach Real Estate 101. This covered how to build a housing subdivision and how to buy and flip an office building, he says: "That was useful to teach

but it wasn't academically very interesting. There's no new knowledge about how to build and flip an office building. It's easy to conceptualise, it's hard to do. But I started doing a couple of things with my Harvard Business School colleagues. One is I started working with our people in the business and environment initiative. I'm not qualified to talk about Paris Accords, I'm not qualified to talk about

parts per million of carbon, but I am qualified to talk about steel and concrete and cash flow. The idea of how can we figure out how to get more capital into mass transit, roads, bridges, renewable energy, things like that, was a place I could contribute".

John started teaching an elective course called Sustainable Cities and Resilient Infrastructure.

## INTERVIEW

Colm Quinn  
Journalist and Sub-Editor,  
Think Media



**WE KNOW ANECDOTALLY THAT WE DON'T FEEL THAT ALERT IF WE'RE IN A CONFERENCE ROOM THAT'S BEEN STUFFY ALL DAY.**

He then got in contact with Joe Allen from the Harvard School of Public Health, who works in infectious diseases: "He had done research around human cognition, around how people think in buildings that don't have proper ventilation or have too many particulates or too many chemicals. We know anecdotally that we don't feel that alert if we're in a conference room that's been stuffy all day".

John and Joe went on to co-author a book called *Healthy Buildings: How Indoor Spaces Drive Performance and Productivity*, which gathered empirical data on how the atmosphere in buildings affects the performance and well-being of those who live or work in them: "It became clear to me as a real estate guy that we're chasing the wrong goal, that finding a little bit of energy savings was a pittance, although easy to measure, compared to finding huge potential increases in productivity and health, so that's what led to the book. Joe was frustrated about explaining some of these concepts to real estate people, and I thought I can articulate this for real estate people, so that they can have buildings that compete better and people that do better, and we don't waste as much effort".

This book seems particularly relevant now in the middle of a pandemic, which has focused people's minds onto the health of the spaces they occupy more than ever before. John explains that the benefits of healthy buildings were clear before the pandemic: "Even though we could argue for the return on investment pre Covid-19, you were essentially looking at avoided future cost if you're thinking about keeping people healthy from just having the flu or mumps or something like that.



But if the avoided future cost is being 14 days on a ventilator with Covid-19 or being laid up for a week like Boris Johnson was, or dying, that's a huge avoided cost, and so it's much better to spend the money upfront either on the capital cost for filtration and sterilising or for the operating costs to run the fans and open the windows".

### **Healthy buildings**

Building healthier buildings or upgrading existing ones offer a number of competitive advantages, says John: "The big landlords are in this race to do what we call 'health theatre', meaning that we want you to see that this thing is healthy. It may not be that washing the floors is the number one thing to do but you can see it, so people do it".

Measuring the health performance indicators can be done by using the 'six Ss', explains John – sensors, settings, surveys, screening, statistics and standards. Air quality data is also becoming more democratised, as individuals are monitoring their own air quality and uploading it to sites such as [purpleair.com](https://purpleair.com), which represents a huge shift: "They have crowd-sourced information about air quality, which really flips the information so that the people know. It's very democratised. And it changes the negotiating position from where in the old days, if you wanted to know air quality, you had to get a hygienist, tanks, beakers, a laboratory and they'd bring the information back and only one person knows: the building manager. Now, the citizens know it, so this is going to make unhealthy buildings highly uncompetitive".

The health of buildings can also be looked at as an amenity for landlords and developers when renting out or selling their buildings.

### **Remote working**

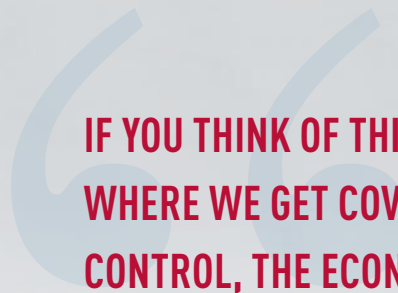
Office owners around the world may want to make their spaces healthier, but many will be worried that even if they do, companies may not want to occupy them anymore. John says nobody knows if the almost complete shift to remote work for certain groups of workers is a permanent one and that this will depend on one of two things happening: 1) we contain Covid-19 around the world in the next year; or, 2) we never do.



He also says that the cost of oil matters in this equation: "Right now, oil is at a historic low, around \$45 a barrel. That means that renewables aren't that competitive and it means that it's cheap to drive. It also means the economy is probably doing pretty poorly because nobody is buying oil. If the price of oil goes up, that means that economies are doing better and it means it's expensive to drive and it means that renewables and mass transit are more competitive. If you think of this ideal box, where we get Covid-19 under control, the economy improves, and it becomes expensive to drive, then density isn't scary for people. They want to be back in the City of London, they want to be back in New York, and it feels like some kind of return to normalcy. It's also possible that we never get Covid-19 under control or there's another virus that comes along, and that the economy stays really slow. That means people are terrified, it means they split up, it means driving isn't expensive. It's much better for the tier two and tier three cities. People won't want to be in the dense urban cores like New York or London ... Couple that to the fact that public health awareness is never going to go away. Even after this particular pandemic eases, people will remember it, they'll think about health, they'll worry about the next pandemic".

Housing configuration is also likely to change. If someone thinks they will always be working remotely, they will need some kind of home office. Michela Hancock of Greystar in London was on a panel with John at the SCSi Conference and spoke about how many of the company's tenants have been looking to upgrade to larger apartments since the pandemic began because they need more space for working from home. Remote working in some form is here to stay, John says: "We accelerated by 20 years people's comfort with remote work. People that can do that, like the elite, who are knowledge workers, who have good bandwidth and don't have to be driving buses, being nurses, cutting meat and making sandwiches, hammering nails, doing 'real work'".

If and when people return to the office, John explains, there is a hierarchy of controls which building owners can employ to protect people's health, from the draconian (keep everyone working from home) to the pedestrian (everyone wearing masks), and many in between such as social distancing, ventilation, etc.: "It's different depending on a number of factors, including, what's the community spread in your area? What's the rent? If you're in New York and someone's getting \$120 per sq. ft rent, it's not that hard for the landlord to spend \$5 per sq. ft to do something around filtration. If you're out in the suburbs and the rent is \$20 per sq. ft, you can't spend \$5 per sq. ft, so you have to spend less based on the capital issue or the rent issue".



**IF YOU THINK OF THIS IDEAL BOX,  
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RETURN TO NORMALCY.**

#### **Solving problems upfront**

John says that in the US, Covid-19 has hit older people in confined nursing homes and people of colour the hardest, not because of genetics, but because of living situation. People who are forced to live with three or four families in an apartment are at a higher danger from the virus and disease spread in general: "There's nowhere to social distance. They have to go to work. They have to take public transportation to get to work, so it disproportionately hits those communities based on the jobs they have. One response from a policy point of view is to invest in making those places cleaner".

As people with money will be able to monitor air quality and go to the best places, that will leave poorer people with no option but to live in the unhealthy places. John is working on a task force right now for a city near Boston, which is focusing on addressing the avoided future cost of illness by redeploying that cash into the present, investing up front in health. He says that when people live in crowded places and all get very sick, the public spends a lot of money on their care, even in the United States: "It would be cheaper in the abstract to say rather than have the public spend all of that hospital money, go ahead and spend it on fixing the ventilation in these people's apartments or have half of these people live in a hotel temporarily until Covid goes away, or clean the subways, or clean the buses, or figure out some way that if a family gets sick, you can isolate that family, so that there's not community spread. Even though it feels weird to put that money upfront, it's so much cheaper than spending the money down the road. I think policymakers should look at that".

John also has an idea for the private sector, which may apply to surveyors. If a group gets together and says "X" is the minimum standard for air quality, and if a building passes this, it will be awarded a seal of approval. He says this is something the SCSi could be really good at. He also predicts that people are going to be thinking more about air quality when renting or buying places to live, work or use. Surveyors could check what a building is designed for regarding what are the air changes per hour, what's the cubic feet per minute, what's the filtration, and then measure how the building is actually performing. This information could help the public to be more informed and make good choices.

# Putting Town Centres First Podcast Series

## One Wish For 2021...



## "If you could do one thing for Irish Town Centres, what would it be?"



**Dr Philip Crowe**



Dedicated Town Centre Officer and Town Centre Management Team needed for each town – see France's Revitalisation des Centre Bourgs Programme



**Tara Buckley**

National Unit for Town Centres and the Collaborative Town Centre Health Check (CTCHC) Programme – scale up the CTCHC Programme asap



**Damir Hajduk**



Holistic and data-driven approach needed to bring the best results for revitalisation and embrace the 'culture' of the town centre – enable and facilitate adaptation and change asap



**Martha Farrell**

Set up a Town Centre Taskforce and a CTCHC Town Team in each town in Ireland with all the key partners and sectors – collaboration is key!



**Sarah Sherlock**



Create national standards for digital infrastructure and systems that support virtual models and data platforms for Irish Town Centres, i.e. a single source of geospatial truth - empower communities and involve children in the process: their Town, their Future!



**Orla Murphy**

"Join up the Dots" - set up an Ireland's Towns Partnership (similar to Scotland's Towns Partnership) reporting to the Department of Taoiseach



**Ian Talbot**

Taoiseach-led National Taskforce for Town Centres which encourages reuse and liveability and supports a National Urban Living Initiative



**Nicki Matthews**



Introduce a system of design-led contemporary housing stock in historic town centre settings which is sensitive to the old, while enabling us to bring in the new....



**Mark Dearey**

Public policy needs to support town centres and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) – marry new technology/data and traditional town centres to ensure they enter a new era of sustainability...



**Jamie McNamara**



Reframe historic town centres, value the historic fabric as an opportunity for traditional skills employment and housing supply – involve the Irish Diaspora in a new wave of rediscovering, repurposing and reusing our historic town centres



For more information on the CTCHC Podcast, please contact **Ali Harvey** – [aharvey@heritagecouncil.ie](mailto:aharvey@heritagecouncil.ie)

[www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/podcast-series-putting-town-centres-first](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/projects/podcast-series-putting-town-centres-first)

# THE STATE OF SURVEYING

AS WE REACH THE END OF AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR, THE *SURVEYORS JOURNAL* SPOKE TO THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE SOCIETY'S PROFESSIONAL GROUPS, AND ASKED THEM HOW COVID-19, AND OTHER FACTORS, HAD AFFECTED THEIR SECTOR, AND THEIR VIEWS ON THE OUTLOOK FOR 2021. THEIR RESPONSES ARE A FASCINATING SNAPSHOT OF SURVEYING IN IRELAND.

## Message from the CEO



2020 has been a year of challenges and change, not least for SCSi members as the construction and property industry grapples with the impact of Covid-19. Thankfully, the reopening of construction sites on May 18, and of the property sector on June 8, have provided some stability for members, and there are positive trends emerging, though uncertainty remains around the outlook for 2021 and beyond.

The SCSi has worked tirelessly to ensure that our members were facilitated to return to work safely and stay operational even during the highest levels of restrictions, and much of this effort was guided by the valuable input of our volunteer members. As members are aware, a review of the governance structures of the SCSi that was commenced by the Board in 2018 was completed in August when our new committee structure, which was carefully considered by the Board, the Council and committees, was approved for ratification by the members at AGM 2020. This new structure facilitates greater collaborative working across our professional groups and harnesses the extensive expertise and insight of our member volunteers to advance the objectives of the organisation. One positive of the Covid-19 disruption is the move to online committee meetings, which has seen fantastic engagement across our professional groups and standing committees, all of which are working towards delivering on specific objectives for the year in the interest of members. The following pages will give readers a window into the world of committees and the broad range of work they are engaged in on behalf of the surveying profession.

The two Covid-19 member impact surveys conducted by the SCSi in April and September evidence improving sentiment as the results show business owners predicting in April that the impact on their firms' income for 2020 would be -31% on average, changing to -20% in September, with a -15% predicted reduction in income for 2021. While only time will reveal the true impact, members can rest assured that the SCSi, through our hardworking committees, Council and Board, will continue to represent the profession in working to ensure a viable and sustainable construction and property market now and into the future.

**Shirley Coulter**

CEO, Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland

## FEATURE

Ann-Marie Hardiman  
Managing Editor,  
Think Media





### Building Surveying – Sabrina Mackin



"During the first lockdown, we had to work proactively and innovate to ensure our clients continued to be served. We introduced virtual inspections and virtual project monitoring. The levels of instructions have only slightly reduced during Levels 3 and 5; most building surveying firms and teams are very busy with inspections and/or project work.

One of the biggest things that has affected building surveyors, and all professional services, is digitalisation. We were already learning new technologies, and Covid-19 amplified the need for us to be more efficient and effective in our communication and reporting.

The main positive is that most building surveyors are busy, and most firms are on track to make their revenue and profit targets for the year. Building surveyors have also taken to working from home well, with our mix of being on site/on inspection and then report writing.

The Building Surveying Professional Group has been catching up once a month. We have created a 'playbook' of our mission statement for the next two years. We have been organising CPD, have reviewed the new Private Sector Contract, and have supported building surveyors throughout

the pandemic by inputting into guidance notes and webinars. We believe there will be pent-up demand in both the private and public sector in 2021. We anticipate that the construction and property industry will be busy and return to buoyancy if a vaccine is produced and distributed. I think a construction industry-led scheme to allow people working in the retail or hospitality industries to re-train in construction and property would be successful, perhaps especially in the areas of BIM and digital data analysis. Interventions are needed to ensure that the pace of public infrastructure and private development continues and increases. While immediate actions are needed, we should lay foundations for long-lasting change. Saving jobs and investing in increased productivity needs to go hand in hand with the stimulus for more sustainable ways of working that will help to meet Ireland's 2030 and 2050 net-zero goals. The momentum created by the accelerated adoption of digital technologies needs to be maintained too.

A comprehensive recovery plan requires engagement of the whole built environment ecosystem, across all sectors, and including a wide group of stakeholders."

### Quantity Surveying – Tomás Kelly



"In common with most sectors, quarter 2 saw a seismic impact on activity in the construction sector with the first lockdown stalling almost all activity. However, the proactive approach by the industry in addressing the safety measures needed has led to us avoiding the second lockdown and helping to aid a slow recovery. Another issue that has affected the construction sector is insurance, and professional indemnity insurance in particular. This has become a major issue, with a reduced number of providers in recent years and those that remain reducing their coverage/exposure and increasing premiums.

On the positive side, in 2020 we saw considerable research activity around the subjects of productivity, the likely demand for skills and, associated with these, greater examination of possibilities for use of digital technology and modern methods of construction. In 2021 we need to move to the implementation phase, and the greater adoption and integration of innovations in the industry.

The Quantity Surveying Professional Group has had a busy diary. Key events have included: the launch of the new Private Sector Contract in conjunction with Engineers Ireland and the Construction Industry Federation; hosting the joint CEEC/SCSI half-day conference; publishing the Real Cost of Housing Report; and, hosting several CPD events and publishing our regular Tender Price Indices.

In the coming year we will continue to host CPD events and have an important report on apartment costs due early in the new year, along with publishing our regular House Reinstatement Report. In addition, we will continue to engage with the Office of Government Procurement, Construction Sector Group and other industry bodies on key issues.

The outlook for the sector will be very much driven by the performance of the economy and the business sectors within it. To that end there is a fair degree of uncertainty surrounding Brexit, Covid-19 and the normal variables. On balance, however, I would anticipate modest growth on 2020 outturn but not back to 2019 levels, and this is likely to lead to increased competitiveness in the market.

Budget 2021 did not include the usual multi-annual capital investment programme, which gives the sector a line of sight for the next few years, so the recently launched 'Review to Renew' review of the National Development Plan will be urgently awaited."



## Project Management – Brian Kehoe



"In these challenging times, project strategy and structure are very important to keep multiple workstreams focused and on time.

Projects in certain sectors are in a holding pattern, such as retail or hospitality, but hopefully they will recommence once the market is assured of normal service. There continues to be a shortage of skills across the industry in both professional and construction services. There is great work being done between the SCSi and the various third-level institutes. More needs to be done to encourage others into trades – new and old. The economic uncertainty regarding Brexit has no doubt further fed a dampening of market sentiment.

The way the construction industry came together and kept activity going through very difficult circumstances was laudable. Thousands of jobs were maintained, and safely. Many have looked to advance their digitalisation strategy, partly out of necessity but equally to improve efficiency in a sector that is often slow to change.

The Project Management Professional Group has brought together a diverse committee and is pursuing several objectives, including: promoting

the PM profession as the 'go-to' profession for all projects; publishing professional standards and guidance; creating a PM CPD series; attracting ambitious and professional members; and, commencing a discussion around registration of the title 'Project Management Surveyor'.

With the strong possibility of a vaccine, the construction and property sector is well positioned to pick up on the pent-up demand for quality assets and development opportunity. With the opening of international travel, Ireland is well positioned to benefit from the great work that the IDA and Enterprise Ireland are doing across the globe. The Irish construction industry should see a bounce following the opening up of restrictions and we should take time now to make improvements and prepare for what could be an upsurge in activity.

Government and industry have largely done well in maintaining the sector during the shutdown. We now need to focus on getting ready to restart normal activity and refocus on high performance by harnessing off-site, modular and digital construction techniques. A Government-led approach to encourage investment from the private sector would be most welcome."

## Geomatics – Sarah Sherlock



"The geomatics sector has of course been impacted by Covid-19. There are increased site times required, increased training, and we now have additional protocols

when we go on site. We're as busy as we always have been, but things are taking longer. It's important to remember that not everyone works on a construction site. We have a number of boundary surveyors that are in very isolated, rural locations. Little has changed for them other than wondering if they can work. People have had to come up with their own innovative ways of doing things.

One of the challenges facing geomatics is that of increasing the numbers choosing it as a career. There are lots of job opportunities, so we would love to see more people taking up the courses in TU Dublin, for example.

One positive from this period is that people in the industry have had time to sit down

and think, and to take stock, which has created opportunities. Many people have also used this time to gain an additional qualification in a subject matter that is of relevance to their direct profession or closely related, so it's given them a new vision.

From a social perspective, what is very exciting is the fact that it has now become clear that there is so much opportunity in Ireland for people to live and work wherever they want.

The Geomatics Professional Group would love to increase its membership, so if you are interested in becoming a member and participating, please do get in contact. We have been trying to get an unmanned aerial vehicle

(UAV) standard up and running, so please reach out if you have expertise in that area. We are also involved in the 5\*S programme to try and engage new students and younger people, and try and bring them on this journey too.

For the future, I think the outlook for our profession is good. Covid has highlighted the need for robust, consistent data that we can use and rely on. It is forcing people to think about how they measure, capture, and use information. We need to think about policy, standards, consistency, repeatability, data governance and data provenance. Perhaps the time has come to look at creating regulation around who's creating spatial information to ensure integrity."

### Rural Agency – James Lee



"March to May/June is prime public auction season for land, so the initial lockdown had a major impact on our sector as all auctions were cancelled. There was a drop of 70% in land sold in the first part of the year. Sales completely stopped in the livestock marts too, at prime selling season. We went online at the livestock marts in early May, which was a big change, but helped us get back to trading properly. I think the online systems we have are here to stay in some form. We continued to use them in the summer and noticed that quite a lot of people are still bidding online. Potential buyers will send someone to look at cattle in the yard in the morning, and bid online later in the day. We have seen a recovery, as postponed auctions have taken place and went well. Prices have held well in the agricultural sector. Brexit is becoming more of an issue again, although we hope the impact of it will have stabilised by March/April of next year. In terms of positives, we have seen increased interest from people looking to moving to rural areas, as they are able to work from home and maintain their salary. That has to be a positive for the countryside. For the Rural Agency Professional Group, one of our main objectives is around rural regeneration, such as people trying to acquire sites and build homes. This is an issue in every rural area, with planning restrictions, etc. We would like to see what can be done to streamline the process. For the future, I am cautiously optimistic. While the shortage of housing supply is underpinning prices to an extent, some people have saved money during the pandemic, and first-time buyers are getting to the market quicker as a result. In agriculture, prices have held steady, and farmers will always find a way to survive. Although we will never manage long term without people in the ring, it has been fascinating to see particularly older farmers adapt to online sales when there was no other choice. In terms of interventions, a lower level of stamp duty on farm transactions would encourage more land sales."

### Planning and Development – Alex Walsh



"The shutdown will ultimately affect unit numbers – they will probably be under 20,000 this year. In addition, developers who are building apartment blocks have to manage their on-site teams more efficiently. That might affect delivery of some these projects.

One of the good things to come out of the pandemic is that people are more focused on what they want out of life, in terms of where they want to live. There was migration out of Dublin to regional areas, which is great because we need balanced regional development, although it will likely create a squeeze on supply. The other thing that affected us is the drop in the sale of development land, which has dramatically decreased, and will impact houses coming to the market in 2021. Everyone's trying to guess what's going to happen to offices. That's going to be a challenge for the workforce as a whole, not just for how we design offices. People who work for home will also need space to work so we will need to try and find solutions for consumers.

The uncertainty around Brexit affected both the land market and residential sales, but once the decision had been made, things settled down. The other thing that affected us was uncertainty around the renewal of the Help to Buy scheme, which has now been renewed. There is also the perennial problem of skilled labour shortages.

We need to sort out the problems that persist in servicing land and getting land to the market for residential development. There are towns and villages across Ireland that are closed for development because of water problems, so proper funding of Irish Water is essential.

The roll-out of the national broadband strategy would also spur on regional development. We are hoping to grow and broaden the membership of our professional group.

The more people we get in, the more ideas, and the more problems we can potentially solve. We're also looking to work on some of the recommendations from the SCSi's report on the cost of housing delivery.

I am positive about the future. I think once you have a Government focused on housing a lot of things tend to happen. We just need to make sure that the right things happen. The supply of development land onto the market will be critical."





I REALLY HOPE WE EMBRACE THE  
POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THIS WORKPLACE  
SHIFT AND IF COMPANIES/PEOPLE CAN BE  
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HEALTH AND HOUSE PRICES.

#### Commercial Agency – Declan Bagnall



"Hospitality and tourism-related industry has been hit particularly hard. Retail struggles are also well documented but this varies between essential/non-essential. As regards the commercial agency surveyor, again the impact is substantial but most notably the stall on the market. Most investors and businesses adopted a 'wait and see' approach. This has resulted in very few transactions and by extension very little transactional evidence to determine where the market is at.

In terms of the workplace, Covid-19 is likely to make long-lasting changes in how we shop, work and socialise. I really hope we embrace the potential benefits of this workplace shift and if companies/people can be as productive with a hybrid model it can only have positive impacts for health and house prices.

Covid-19 really dominated the landscape but all other political and everyday issues still remain and the underlying challenges around them including: Brexit; planning and the timescales around it; the housing shortage; and, build costs.

Many of our CPD events were moved online and this is a lot less time consuming. Also, it leaves you the option of fitting this around your day/week. I'm a firm believer that Zoom/Teams is not an adequate replacement for face-to-face meetings. There are situations, however, where it's a better, more efficient medium.

The Commercial Agency Professional Group is involved in all aspects that affect and influence the commercial property market, including: driving the profession forward; advocating for and supporting the move towards sustainability and green leases; liaising with the PSRA; e-conveyancing and conveyancing in general; and, education and CPD.

I believe 2021 should see a much more active market as we begin the phase of living with the virus. Decisions that were put on hold will have to be made at some stage. I think it will be a challenging year for the industry, albeit better than 2020."

#### Property and Facilities Management – Lily Ellis



"The PMFM sector never really stopped work. We were one of the first to come back, to keep schemes, shopping centres and apartment blocks open. There was a massive focus at first to get buildings shut safely, and then to keep things ticking over. Some of our projects are busier than ever before. For example, in a shopping centre, a lot of work goes into security, car parks, cleaning of trolleys and trolley bays, and managing the flow of customers.

On the residential side, people were at home all day for the first time, so that was a huge change for our membership. The SCSI offered invaluable support to members in terms of checklists and points of contact.

If we look back to 2007/2008, capital markets dried up overnight, and what kept companies afloat was the PMFM revenues that were coming through. That's been demonstrated again this time around.

From a Professional Group perspective, this time last year we would never have envisaged doing our annual conference virtually, but we adapted and whatever happens we will adapt and make sure that we are as inclusive as possible.

The whole focus for the FM cohort is what's going to happen next? What's the future of the office going to look like? A massive shift is underway around promoting the office as a place that facilitates you to be at your most productive, that is safe for you to be in, that is collaborative. FM is at the centre of these discussions because in the throes of it we were the ones that had to make things safe and as we start to come out of this, we're the ones that are having to re-imagine the function and purpose of workplaces. How do we accommodate space management, dynamic occupancy planning, workers' experience? These will be the big drivers for the future.

I'm very positive about the future and the talent and level of resilience within the business. I think it leaves us in a really good place moving into the recovery. The value we add will only increase; whether you're on the FM or the PM side, the future of the workplace is going to markedly change and we're going to be a big part of that."

### Residential Agency – Jonathan Quinn



"The nature of residential sales and valuations is viewing properties; the ban on this led to a stagnation of business. Some 54% of our agents experienced renegotiations of sales, with 20% resulting in a renegotiated price. Up to 12% of all sales failed. The rental market has been largely protected due to Government supports, with only 8% of tenants not meeting their monthly obligations.

The lockdown also left potential buyers with time on their hands, so enquiries went up. There was pent-up demand when we emerged, and many agents reported price increases. Vendors held off putting property on the market, and this had a big impact on supply. Combined with the surge in sales in the summer, agents are reporting the lowest

level of stock ever on their books. This may account for the strong values despite the impact of Covid-19.

Agents have been forced to up their game online with virtual tours and walk-through videos. This was already a developing trend, but was accelerated. The enforced experiment of remote working has allowed companies and employees to see the benefits of a remote workforce. Long-term plans to work three to four days a week at home allow employees to broaden their search for property.

For the Professional Group, meetings have become regular online affairs. The group had some input to the Joint Sector Protocols. We decided to delay our residential market report until August, to reflect the changing attitudes and conditions. The group is also inputting to the PSRA minimum standards and the PSRA Code of Practice. We have been trying to put some focus on residential valuations and a working group has been set up. We are also hoping to develop more member supports.

Housing supply was an issue prior to this year and Covid-19 has exacerbated this. There is a worry that about the impact on the wider economy when Government supports are withdrawn. In the rental sector it is likely that figures for rent arrears will grow.

Quality of life has become a focus during the lockdown periods and people see their home as an extension of this; whether in the country or city, interest in property is very strong at present."

### Valuation – Mark Synnott



"The biggest impact for the valuation sector has been the uncertainty Covid-19 created in the market. That led to the inclusion of a material valuation uncertainty clause in all valuations to take account of the lack of market evidence. From March to July, the Valuation Committee met virtually on a weekly basis, and we set up a Material Valuations Uncertainty Forum made up of representatives from all the main valuations firms to look at the available evidence and decide when the clause could be lifted in particular sectors. In September it was lifted from the private rental sector (PRS), multi-family residential property, and social housing on long-term lease to the Government. Since then, it has been lifted from further sectors such as industrial, offices, development land, and nursing homes. It is still in place for certain areas of retail, hospitality, leisure, etc.

Lower market activity and a general fall in values have created challenges, leading to some job losses. While Covid has dominated, Brexit is now returning as an issue. Professional indemnity cover also remains a very serious issue for the sector. On the positive side, the PRS is going from strength to strength, as is the industrial/warehousing/logistics sector, in response to the rise in online shopping. However, this change in

how we shop, as well as increasing numbers working from home, has had a negative effect on the high street. The Valuations Professional Group has now returned to six-weekly meetings, but our regular meetings throughout the year have been invaluable. We will try to continue them as a way to get information to our membership, and also to allow us to share our experiences and collaborate. We also ran CPD events on the material valuations uncertainty clause. We found the interactive online format, where people could ask questions informally, to be very helpful. The Material Valuations Uncertainty Forum will come to a natural end as the clause is removed from more and more sectors.

For the future, the arrival of a vaccine will improve sentiment, which will improve transaction activity. However, when Government supports end, there will likely be economic consequences. We are also keeping a watchful eye on Brexit. The general consensus is that the market will recover, although at different levels in different sectors. Savings in banks and credit unions are up, and hopefully people will spend domestically when that pent-up demand is released.





# DO WE VALUE SUSTAINABILITY?

A STUDY PREPARED FOR THE MSC IN REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT AND FINANCE, OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY, LOOKED AT HOW VALUERS IN THE DUBLIN OFFICE MARKET ARE REFLECTING SUSTAINABILITY. THE RESULTS ARE SUMMARISED HERE.

**P**roperty investors are increasingly recognising the important role that sustainability plays in driving returns, stabilising cash flow, and meeting environmental, social and governance policies (ESGs). Hence, the 'sustainability status' of a property has become a vital component of the investment criteria for many investment funds. Driving a sustainable built environment is now enshrined in legislation governing building standards not only in Ireland but throughout the European Union (EU), arising from the Energy Performance in Buildings Directive (EPBD). This has overseen the introduction of NZEB – Nearly Zero Energy Building standards – for all new buildings occupied after December 2020. Regulation is poised only to increase, as the EU implements a strategy to achieve a low- and zero-emission building stock by 2050. Increased regulation, together with growing interest in ESG policies among building users and investors, indicates that the subject of 'sustainable' or 'green' buildings is likely to gain increased attention in the years ahead.

## Sustainability and value

What is a 'sustainable' or 'green' building, and how are valuers reflecting this in valuations?

## FEATURE

**Lena Clarke**  
Chartered Valuation Surveyor and  
lecturer in valuations at TU Dublin



Most definitions recognise that sustainability within the built environment is not purely a matter of energy efficiency, although this is a vital component, but a more holistic concept that encompasses a wide range of issues from the building materials used, site biodiversity and efficient use of utilities, to the health and well-being of its occupiers, and the impact on the wider community and the environment.<sup>1</sup> Many environmental or 'eco' labels such as BREEAM, LEED and WELL recognise these principles in their accreditation processes. There is ample international research concluding that advances in building design, energy efficiency and improved specification impact positively on property values, owing to the many benefits sustainable buildings offer.<sup>2</sup>

## Professional guidance – valuations and sustainability

The role of the valuer is to consider all factors salient to value. This includes all the attributes and risks of the property, including its sustainability status. The RICS has recommended the inclusion of sustainability considerations as part of the valuation process since 2009. The most recent version of The Red Book, RICS Valuation Global Standards (2020), now references sustainability within the mandatory professional standards, and an update of the RICS Guidance Note on Sustainability and Commercial Property Valuations is currently underway.

## Irish experience

This study, comprising 32 valuers and nine fund managers, set out to gain an insight into the valuation reporting styles and techniques being used with regard to sustainability and Dublin offices. The study revealed that Irish valuers strongly acknowledge that sustainability features have a positive influence on value. In addition, valuers appear to have good awareness of the benefits of green offices, with a strong majority (89%) saying they either "always" or "occasionally" take sustainability credentials in the form of 'eco' labels into account when analysing comparable data.

Despite this, reflecting sustainability is not deeply embedded in valuation techniques, with 79% of valuers responding that they do not make any specific adjustment for sustainability in their calculation of market values. Key barriers identified for this include: limited comparable data to support any adjustment; difficulty in analysing data; and, a need for valuers to develop their own knowledge and expertise in this area. That said, traditional reporting practices have started to evolve over the last three years, with 35% of valuers indicating that they now report separately on sustainability in valuation reports.

The study finds that institutional investors in the Irish market are at a far more advanced stage with regard to their appreciation of sustainable buildings, and many consider sustainability to be the future and a real value driver.



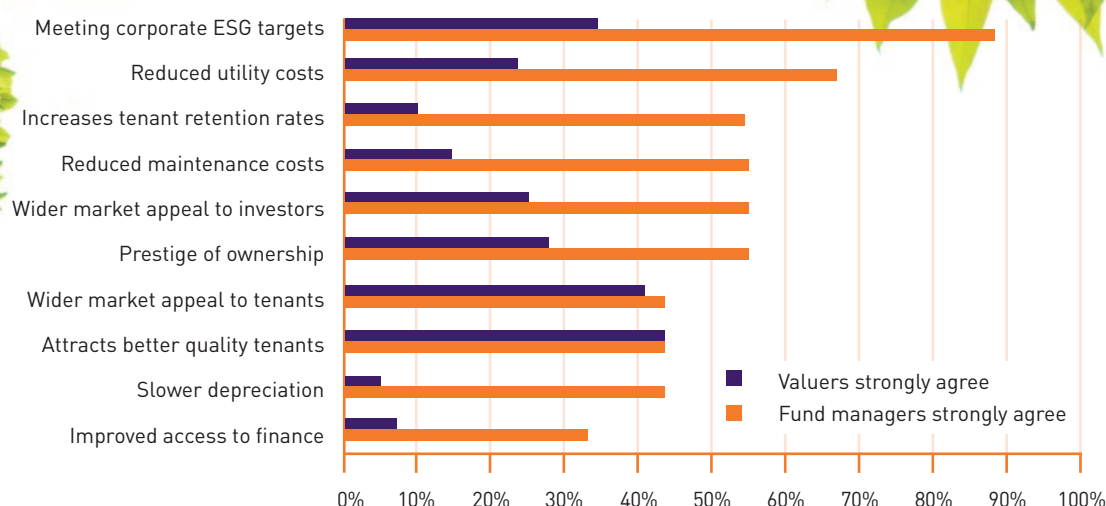


FIGURE 1: Perceived benefits of a 'good/excellent' eco rating in a Dublin office. Comparing results for "strongly agree" between valuers and fund managers.

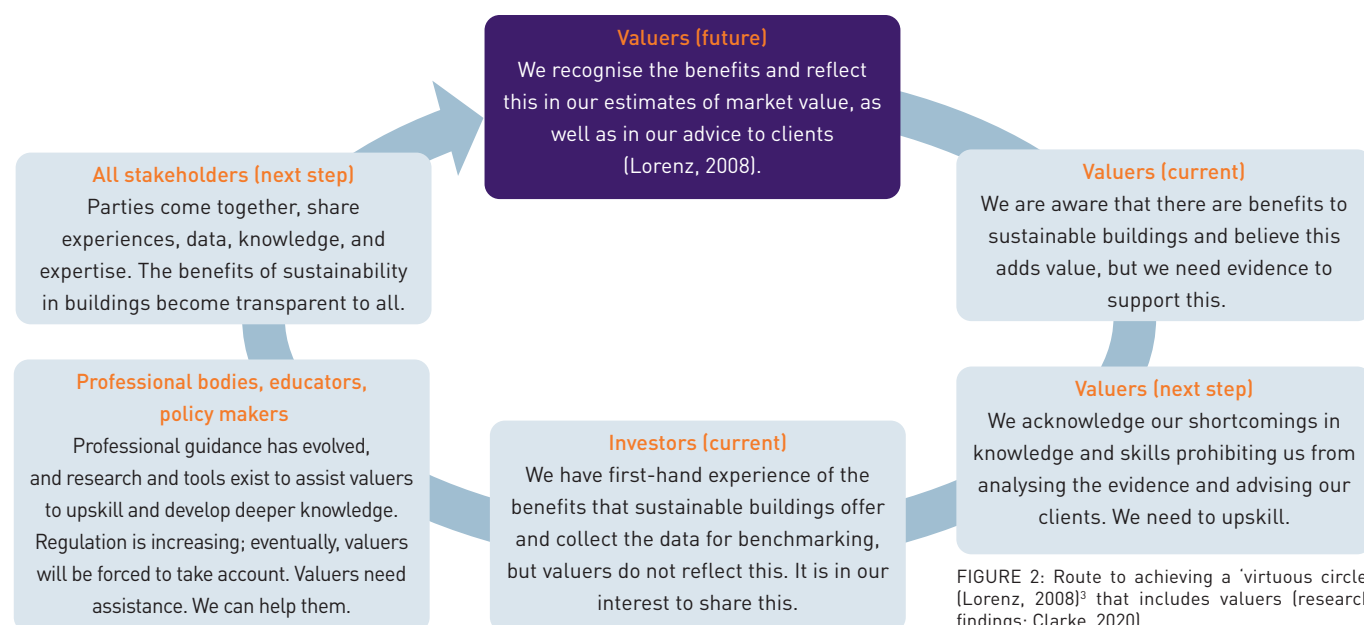


FIGURE 2: Route to achieving a 'virtuous circle' (Lorenz, 2008)<sup>3</sup> that includes valuers (research findings; Clarke, 2020).

While a large proportion of investors believe valuers are taking sustainability into account in market valuations, their view is that the standard of reporting and awareness within reports is relatively low.

The study revealed that there is a mismatch or disconnect between clients and valuers in terms of the depth of appreciation and what are the key benefits of sustainable buildings (Figure 1). Fund managers "strongly agreed" that the main benefits of "sustainable offices" are: meeting corporate ESG policies; reduced utility costs; and, increased tenant retention rates (resulting in more sustainable cash flow). Valuers identified the main benefits as: attracting better quality tenants; wider market appeal to tenants; and, meeting ESG targets.

### Future roadmap

Investors/property owners have a richer appreciation owing to first-hand experience of the benefits that a green building can deliver, being at the forefront of their development in recent years. Valuers have an awareness of sustainability but a deeper appreciation is required for this to transpose into valuations, particularly with regard to why it is such a value driver for investors. The study clearly identified that valuers believe that "when clients request/ require that sustainability forms part of their valuation methodology", this will be the main driver for changes in reporting practices. Therefore, it is imperative for clients to direct valuers as to what they require and be specific in their instructions with regard to the consideration of sustainability.

This study concludes that the time is opportune for parties to collaborate, and for clients to share information and their experience of managing sustainability in buildings, so that the data and knowledge banks that already exist for GRESB and other portfolio reporting purposes can be considered and reflected upon by valuers. Valuers need to upskill and switch on to the important role they can play in advancing sustainability in the built environment, in aligning economic return with environmental and social performance of property assets, at the same time ensuring the profession's integrity, and providing a higher-quality service that meets their clients' ever-evolving needs (Figure 2).

References available upon request.

# CONSERVATION TRIBULATIONS

REPURPOSING OLDER BUILDINGS IN OUR VILLAGES, TOWNS AND CITIES REQUIRES A REVIEW OF EXISTING LEGISLATION, AND A HOLISTIC APPROACH.

**S**ome 20 years ago the Planning and Development Act 2000 came into force, bringing with it, for the first time, statutory protection for buildings other than under the National Monuments Acts. Today there are over 40,000 protected structures in Ireland, many located in city, town and village centres. Much has been achieved in those 20 years – the conservation skills base has increased considerably, from a comparatively low base – although skills shortages continue and there is a worry that the sector will fail to attract new talent. While the legislation has achieved much, it could be questioned whether it is adequately protecting our architectural heritage when one considers the number of protected structures at risk of, or suffering from, dereliction at the heart of our cities, towns and villages.

Some consider the legislation overly restrictive, seeing it as an impediment. Others have called for a grading system whereby the standards of protection would be lowered for less important buildings. While this could have benefits, it needs careful consideration and would require significant investment in re-surveying buildings to determine their grade. Ultimately, a cross-sector review of the legislation is needed: 20 years is a long time, and there are new factors to contend with.

## **Dereliction**

Dereliction has far-reaching consequences for our urban centres. Dereliction spoils the party for everyone, discouraging investment by neighbouring property owners, making a street a less pleasant place to work, shop or play, and reducing property values. Recent commentators have likened abandoning urban buildings to “vandalism for the property-owning classes,” and have proposed a form of ‘use it or lose it’ property tax. While this would help in managing the built environment for the common good, it perhaps fails to recognise some of the wider issues at play. An ever-present problem with the reuse of upper floors and multi-storey buildings in town centres is compliance with fire safety regulations, as well as other building regulations such as access. Compartmentation of multi-use buildings and the provision of means of escape commonly makes reuse of upper floors impractical, to say nothing of being commercially unviable. Thus, the impetus for maintaining and investing in the upper floors of a building is diminished! Unfortunately, blanket application of guidelines intended for the most part for new buildings, with little in the way of exploring practical solutions or a risk-based analysis approach, simply compounds matters.

## **FEATURE**

Frank Keohane  
Building Conservation  
Accredited Surveyor



# THE BUZZWORD ON THE STREET IS OF COURSE SUSTAINABILITY, YET THE MOST SUSTAINABLE BUILDING IS THE BUILDING THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN BUILT.

## Holistic sustainability

The buzzword on the street is of course sustainability, yet the most sustainable building is the building that has already been built. Authorities, however, place little value on embodied energy and instead are pushing for deep retrofitting of our older building stock by insulating the building envelope, while providing little in the way of practical best practice guidance. For anyone working with older buildings, be they protected or unprotected, it is crucial that they recognise the fundamental differences between traditional and contemporary construction techniques. Traditional solid walls are built from permeable materials such as brick, stone, earth, timber, and lime-based mortars, plasters and renders. Traditional walls absorb moisture but readily allow it to evaporate when conditions become drier. This contrasts with modern or contemporary construction, which relies on impermeable barriers to prevent moisture entering the fabric. It should also be noted that past interventions such as the use of cement mortars or renders can alter moisture levels in a traditional solid wall and recognising this is critical when addressing dampness as well as specifying retrofit works.

I.S. EN 16883:2017: Guidelines for Improving the Energy Performance of Traditional Buildings provides guidance for sustainably improving the energy performance of historic buildings while respecting their heritage significance. It presents a normative working procedure for selecting measures to improve energy performance, employing a holistic approach to the investigation, analysis and documentation of the building. This level of understanding enables informed decisions when developing and implementing refurbishment strategies that can at the same time retain the building's heritage significance.

## Rising damp

A critical step in developing effective long-term strategies for retrofitting of traditional buildings is the correct analysis of dampness and the specification of remedial measures in advance of undertaking retrofit works. The study of moisture movement in older buildings is an evolving process and lessons continue to be learnt, often from mistakes made! Preconceived industry-wide perceptions continue to be debunked as a more nuanced understanding of the behaviour of traditional solid walls emerges. In response, the RICS, the Property Care Association (PCA) and statutory heritage organisations in the UK have jointly agreed and endorsed a methodology for the Investigation of Moisture and its Effects in Traditional Buildings. While this is not yet official RICS guidance, it has far-reaching implications for surveyors who regularly address damp problems in older traditional properties. As with EN 16883, it stresses the importance of adopting a holistic approach to investigation and analysis while considering the heritage significance of the subject building when making recommendations. One critical action will be to limit the industry-wide reliance on moisture meters when measuring moisture in walls owing to their tendency to give falsely high readings, leading to unnecessary and often damaging damp-proofing remediation works. BS 5250: 2011 Code of Practice for The Control of Condensation in Buildings provides further important guidance in this regard.

## The role of the SCSi

Members of the SCSi already play an active role in the conservation of historic buildings at many levels but have the potential to play a critical leadership role as specialists in conservation as well as in upgrading and retrofitting buildings of all ages, not least traditional or historic buildings. In order to provide a scheme of quality assurance for the public, the Society has implemented a Building Conservation Accreditation Scheme (BCAS) for surveyors specialising in historic building conservation. The BCAS is fully affiliated with the conservation accreditation scheme that the RICS has operated since 1992. In the UK, the RICS' conservation accreditation scheme has been fully endorsed by the statutory heritage organisations for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The SCSi hopes to secure a similar endorsement of its accreditation scheme in Ireland.



# SUSTAINABLE RESEARCH

IS A RESEARCH DEGREE APPROPRIATE FOR YOU OR YOUR ORGANISATION TO HELP THE PROFESSION MEET ITS TARGETS?

*"WE DO NOT INHERIT THE EARTH FROM OUR ANCESTORS, WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN".*

**T**his thought-provoking quote got me thinking about whether we, as surveyors, know how we can best deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? And if not, what are we doing to develop and pass on knowledge to the next generation of surveyors?

A recent article in the RICS publication *Modus* ('Accelerating progress on climate action', Louise Scott, PWC) proposed the SDGs as a framework for the surveying sector to respond to climate action. Scott notes that with 17 goals, and almost 170 targets, the SDGs are a framework that can be used as the lens through which organisations think about, plan and conduct their business. This is not a new idea. Many organisations in the surveying sector have been engaging with these principles for many years and have been embedding them into their organisation's strategy. Indeed, TU Dublin's Strategic Plan revolves around 'People, Planet and Partnership', with targets closely aligned to the SDGs. But are we or our employees embracing these challenges to deliver on these targets?

And if not, how should we upskill as surveyors to be at the forefront of this crucial area of knowledge for the future of the profession? This article suggests that the best option for some across the surveying sector is a structured piece of research targeted at individual professional development or an organisation-specific aim.

## Collaboration and specialisation

Sustainability has become a common term in construction and valuation circles. The SCSi has formed a Sustainable Development Group. Emer Byrne, TU Dublin lecturer and vice chair of the group, notes the growing importance of the SDGs to the surveying industry. They cover the traditional areas of construction through the industry, innovation and infrastructure goal, and achieving affordable housing through the sustainable cities and community goal. Other goals such as climate action, and responsible consumption and production, have broader targets applicable across many aspects of the surveying industry. With such broad goals it is important for organisations and individuals to specialise in the elements they wish to lead on to be in the best position to advise their clients. For many organisations or individuals that route may be through a research-focused study relevant to their own specific objectives. TU Dublin aims to collaborate with industry to produce research on specific issues that organisations require, and will work with individuals or organisations to develop a research plan. In line with the TU Dublin Strategic Plan, this is particularly the case with issues relating to sustainable development.



## FEATURE

**Frank Harrington**  
Head of Real Estate, Assistant  
Head of School of Surveying and  
Construction Management,  
TU Dublin





**Table 1: Structure of research programmes.**

		Postgraduate Diploma by Research (PgDip. Res)	Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
NFQ level		9	9	10
Element 1	Original research	72.5 credits	142.5 credits	290 credits
Element 2	Research plans	7.5 credits	7.5 credits	30 credits
Element 3	Employability skills modules	5 credits	15 credits	20 credits
Element 4	Discipline skills modules	5 credits	15 credits	20 credits
Duration		1 year FT Up to 2 years PT	2 years FT Up to 3 years PT	4 years FT Up to 6 years PT
<b>Total credits</b>		<b>90 credits</b>	<b>180 credits</b>	<b>360 credits</b>

Prof. Lloyd Scott, Head of Knowledge in an academic Sustainable Research Group, notes that sustainability is very applicable to surveyor's professional practice: "Professional decisions around sustainability must be informed by sound and factual knowledge. Sustainability education and research prepares people to cope with, manage and shape social, economic and ecological conditions characterised by change, uncertainty, risk and complexity". Lloyd has supervised and assessed many successful students and notes that: "The rise to prominence of research in sustainable knowledge and practice in the built environment in more recent times signposts a significant step towards fostering 'global citizens' who are central to building a safer and more sustainable future".

#### Flexible research options

While there are many PhD opportunities in this area, there are also other routes to undertake a piece of relevant research with TU Dublin, as outlined in Table 1. Dr Roisin Murphy, Head of Research in the School of Surveying and Construction Management (SSCM), notes that a postgraduate research degree within the SSCM offers candidates a flexible opportunity to research an area of their choice across any of the disciplines, under the supervision of our experienced staff. Within the SSCM, postgraduate research degrees may be undertaken on either a full-time or part-time basis, with two intakes of students per academic year, and may lead to a postgraduate diploma, master's or doctoral award. The flexibility of a part-time option, together with the nature of self-directed study, is ideally suited to people already working within surveying and construction management, and often the chosen research idea stems from their workplace. Roisin notes that we have several students researching

solutions for their employer, so undertaking this type of professional development is mutually beneficial. In addition to academic awards some researchers may aim to produce published academic papers, which are another potentially valuable output from a research degree.

There are also opportunities for more traditional research projects such as those within the SSCM specialisms listed in Table 2. The staff in TU Dublin are happy to discuss and help develop targeted research projects for individuals or organisations, and there are discounts for past graduates. The SSCM has a long history of undertaking high-quality research with a global impact; therefore, working with our experienced academic supervisors will ensure that the highest academic standards are achieved in what is a very rewarding research journey.

If your organisation does not have personnel to commit to research degrees, we are happy to advertise funded or self-funded opportunities on our website for other interested researchers. Working in collaboration with industry, we are confident that the SSCM in TU Dublin can play a significant part in advancing surveyors' contribution to achieving the SDGs.

#### Knowledge for the future

In the new normal, there are ample opportunities for continued professional development and reskilling. TU Dublin and the SCSi offer a range of programmes including CPD, Pg. Cert, Pg. Dips and master's. But for some, upskilling by way of a research project is often more appropriate: a flexible study option that is often more suited to specialising in a specific issue. The potential research topics are vast, but a research degree focusing on an aspect of the UN SDGs is certainly one way we, as surveyors, can advance, spread and pass on knowledge to the next generation.

**Table 2: SSCM research specialisms.**

#### Quantity Surveying and Construction Economics

- Building Information Modelling (BIM)
- Supply chain management
- Strategic management and construction
- Life cycle costing
- Commercial management
- Contract administration
- Construction economics

#### Construction Management

- Construction management
- Construction project management
- Building surveying
- Health and safety management
- Sustainable construction
- Construction technology
- Lean constructions

#### Real Estate

- Land use economics and policy
- Property economics and valuation
- Housing
- Commercial real estate
- Property market behaviour
- Corporate real estate management
- Asset management

#### Geographic Science/Geomatics and Geodetic Surveying

- Geographic information systems
- Spatial databases and spatial data infrastructures
- Land management
- 3D data collection and visualisation
- 3D modelling

#### Inter-disciplinary

- Built environment education
- Labour market analysis



# DISCOVERING SPACE

THE 5\*S PROGRAMME OFFERS SURVEYORS AND SURVEYING STUDENTS THE CHANCE TO BE GEOMENTORS TO THE NEXT GENERATION OF SURVEYORS.

# O

## ppportunity in adversity

The current restrictions present a challenge for all of us. The landscape for how we engage with friends, family, colleagues, customers, and potential customers has changed utterly. Education, training and schools programmes are traditionally delivered face to face and there are significant challenges in transferring these interactions to an online medium, particularly when it comes to the more human level of networking and engaging with other people. However, with adversity comes opportunity and, as schools remain open, it is an ideal time to demonstrate that surveying is a robust profession that can continue to operate even in the most difficult circumstances. It is particularly vital that we as a profession maintain contact and engagement with students in schools to help ensure that we harness the potential of the next generation of surveyors.

How we engage with schools reflects on our profession and influences some of the choices that students will make about their careers. Both surveyors and the SCSi have shown during the current crisis that we are dynamic, resilient and agile professionals who embrace change. There is no doubt that we are living in a time of seismic social change. For example, the way we work in the future may be changed forever as there is a greater desire for working from home. Students are increasingly interested in how change will impact on their futures. They are particularly interested in matters relating to climate change.

## What is the 5\*S programme?


The SCSi, in partnership with Maynooth University, TU Dublin, Esri Ireland and Ordnance Survey Ireland, has developed a schools programme to showcase spatial and GIS data to students. The programme has been developed following an SFI Discover award funded by Science Foundation Ireland and ESERO Ireland. 5\*S builds on two existing national school-based programmes. A collaboration between Esri Ireland's award-winning ArcGIS for Schools programme and the SCSi Day in the Life recruitment programme offers the opportunity to combine a national network of volunteers with an existing data/training infrastructure in Irish schools.

## FEATURE

James Lonergan  
Director of Education  
and CPD, SCSi







The 5\*S schools project helps teachers to teach about the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and engage in activities that help to fulfil them. The programme began development prior to Covid-19 and was originally envisaged to be delivered face to face. However, thanks to the dedication of the project team, the programme has successfully pivoted and can now be delivered fully online. This is great news for schools that are interested in getting involved, as the programme can now easily be delivered to schools across Ireland and demonstrates how well our profession can manage change.

### Who are GeoMentors and what will they do?

GeoMentors will be researchers, surveyors and related professionals who use spatial and/or GIS data either in their day-to-day work or in their studies. Those who are on a full-time or part-time geomatics, GIS, geography or related undergraduate or postgraduate programme can also become a GeoMentor. Equally, those working in surveying, agriculture, forestry, and marine are also encouraged to get involved. The key requirement is that volunteers have some expertise in the sector and that they are willing to get involved to help encourage the next generation to consider careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

Training will be provided to GeoMentors so that all volunteers are fully equipped with information, knowledge and all the support materials required. SCSi members and trainees who get involved can use the time spent on training and delivery towards their CPD requirement, which is an added bonus.

At the training, GeoMentors will be taught how satellite, spatial and GIS data can be harnessed to inform a range of activities within our daily lives, ranging across agriculture, marine, forestry, urban and rural planning, and monitoring of service provision, to name just a few. From there, GeoMentors will be equipped to explain how data can be used to develop more sustainable practices.

### What training is provided?

A two-hour training session is all that is required to gain your GeoMentor certificate. The training will introduce the 5\*S content and ArcGIS online/StoryMaps, and will count as two hours of CPD.

You can also take part in an optional one-day advanced workshop on Copernicus Data and software – focusing on applications of interest for surveyors, multispectral and synthetic aperture RADAR with examples for land cover maps, agriculture, flood mapping, etc. Seven hours of CPD will be awarded to those who complete the full-day workshop.

### School visits

GeoMentors will be paired up with a school via video-conferencing to provide insights remotely. You will be asked to give a one-hour (approx.) online demo to classes in Junior Cert geography or science using supplied 5\*S content/StoryMaps. This will most likely be remote via Teams, and all software and data will be provided by the 5\*S team.

### What schools can get involved?

The 5\*S programme is aimed at Junior Cycle and Transition Year students. All schools with students in Junior Cycle or Transition Year are welcome to get involved. The learning outcomes of the 5\*S programme are closely linked to the Junior Cycle curriculum across geography, science and CSPE.

### How can I get my school involved?

If you are a teacher (or if you know a teacher) interested in teaching about the Sustainable Development Goals and linking in with practitioners who will use satellite, spatial and GIS data to explain concepts in your curriculum, we would love to hear from you.

### Where can I get more information?

The SCSi hosted a CPD event on November 25, which was delivered by Dr Conor Cahalane of Maynooth University. The CPD event explained the programme in detail, and is available online for those who would like more information about the programme.

### How can I get involved as a GeoMentor?

If you are a student on an undergraduate or postgraduate geography, geomatics, GIS, or related programme, you are welcome to get involved. If you are an SCSi geomatics trainee, Chartered Member or Fellow, or if you are working in the geomatics, GIS, or related fields, we would love to hear from you too. The first step is to get in touch! The commitment is just two hours of training and one hour delivery to a school. Please contact the team involved and follow our progress using the contact details below:

✉ [james@scsi.ie](mailto:james@scsi.ie)  
✉ [Conor.Cahalane@mu.ie](mailto:Conor.Cahalane@mu.ie)  
✉ [education@scsi.ie](mailto:education@scsi.ie)  
✉ [5S\\_Surveyors@mu.ie](mailto:5S_Surveyors@mu.ie)  
🐦 [@5S\\_Discover](https://twitter.com/5S_Discover) on Twitter  
🌐 SCSi 5\*S website: [www.scsi.ie/students/studying/space-surveyors-students/](http://www.scsi.ie/students/studying/space-surveyors-students/)



# A CHANCE FOR CHANGE

OVER 300 MEMBERS LOGGED IN FOR THE SCSI'S FIRST-EVER VIRTUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DECEMBER 2.

**T**he SCSi held a hugely successful virtual conference on December 2, with over 300 surveyors from all over the country logging in for presentations, panel discussions and break-out sessions from a truly impressive line-up of speakers. The Hopin online events platform enabled attendees to move seamlessly from the main stage to break-out sessions, networking opportunities and exhibition areas, while the chat function facilitated comments and questions throughout the morning. The event was supported by main sponsor Eugene F. Collins, along with *The Irish Times*, Ofrr, Murphy Geospatial, SAP Landscapes, and Autodesk.

## Welcome

Society CEO Shirley Coulter welcomed delegates to the Conference and spoke of the resilience and willingness to adapt demonstrated by the profession in these last months. She said that staff and volunteers at the Society had worked tirelessly to assist members, producing reports and supports to enable a safe return to work. She reiterated that the SCSi is in a unique position to provide expert advice to Government, both on the changes required by Covid-19, and on tackling the ongoing issues that we face, such as the housing crisis.

Society President Micheál Mahon said that this first virtual conference was indicative of the huge changes that had taken place, and that this period was also a catalyst for further much-needed change in the industry. He said that the topics covered in the conference were areas in which the Society is hugely active, such as housing, technology, and the environment. He asked members to reach out and get involved in their Society, whether to join a committee or to contribute their expertise to these ongoing discussions.

## Housing

The first topic on the main stage was 'Housing', and the eminent panel, chaired by Rowena Quinn of Hunters Estate Agents, included Dr Rory Hearne, Assistant Professor in Social Policy at Maynooth University, John Moran, CEO and founder of RHH International and Interim Chair of the Land Development Agency, Claire Solon, Managing Director of Greystar Ireland, and Paul Mitchell, Director at Mitchel McDermott.

Rory Hearne drew on 20 years' experience in housing research in a presentation on the roots of Ireland's housing crisis, and how to solve it. He said that Covid-19 had highlighted the importance of quality of housing for all sectors of society. He advocated for a massive State



a chance for change  
Resilience | Recovery | Reimagine

building programme to provide up to 400,000 social and affordable homes over the coming decades, and spoke about the benefits of the cost rental model as part of that solution.

The discussion that followed showed the complexity of this issue, which will require radical approaches across a range of areas. Topics included the need for better standards in private rented accommodation, and the challenges of funding such a massive building programme and the infrastructure required alongside it. Environmental and sustainability issues were also discussed, especially in relation to urban and rural regeneration, in particular renovations of living space 'over the shop', and the regulatory challenges inherent in these. The issue of achieving real social integration in social and affordable housing, as is the case in many European models, was also discussed.

## FEATURE

Ann-Marie Hardiman  
Managing Editor,  
Think Media





### Modern construction methods

This session, chaired by Society President Micheál Mahon, featured an international panel of speakers and much food for thought. Mark Farmer, author of the Farmer Review, an influential 2016 independent government review of the UK's construction labour model, spoke about how adoption of modern construction methods is essential to rebuild the resilience of the sector, which has been eroded by skills shortages, recessions, and lack of public trust. He said that change is no longer theoretical; it is happening across the industry, but needs leadership. Amy Marks, Head of Industrialised Construction Strategy and Evangelism at Autodesk, gave the US and international perspective. She talked about how modern construction methods means far more than just prefabrication, and how data and how we use it will be crucial to success, particularly as large international firms seek consistency in design and build across national boundaries. PJ Rudden, Chair of the Construction Sector Group's Innovation Committee, gave the Irish perspective and described the enormous amount of work being done here to re-invent the sector and build a new industry in Ireland. The Q&A session that followed discussed how Ireland, with its large numbers of small and medium-sized firms, can meet these challenges. The message from the panel was that Ireland can be at the centre of change because of our ability to integrate new technology into our culture, and that the key to success is use of data and design across multiple projects, if firms can bring clients on the journey with them to embrace standardisation and collaboration.

### Driving performance, livability and sustainability

The final session on the main stage was chaired by Lily Ellis of JLL and was an extremely timely discussion of how we can make buildings better for a post-Covid world. Catriona Brady, Head of Better Places for People and Strategic Planning Lead at the World Green Building Council, introduced the Council's Health and Well-Being Framework, which was launched recently and which sets out aims and guidelines to make buildings better, not just for the people who live and work in them, but for all those involved in the building's life cycle. Michela Hancock, Managing Director of Greystar Europe, offered fascinating case studies of two build-to-rent developments in the UK, and discussed how Greystar's placemaking principles create and nurture communities, including how this has had to change in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, when communal spaces could not be used and in-person events were no longer possible. Prof. John Macomber of Harvard Business School presented research into healthy buildings, and how evidence of the

health and social benefits is now being matched by a convincing business case for developers, investors and occupiers. The panel discussion highlighted the fact that the landscape post Covid has changed irrevocably; public health is now permanently on the agenda, and professional organisations such as the SCSl have a vital role in showing that the industry is ready for change, and ready to show leadership in normalising these approaches.

### Message from the Minister

The Conference featured a video message from Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O'Brien TD. The Minister thanked the industry for its role in delivering housing and infrastructure in the safest possible manner during the past months. He spoke of the Government's ambitious plans to provide high-quality, sustainable, affordable housing in the coming years, and said that this would not be possible without partnership with the industry.

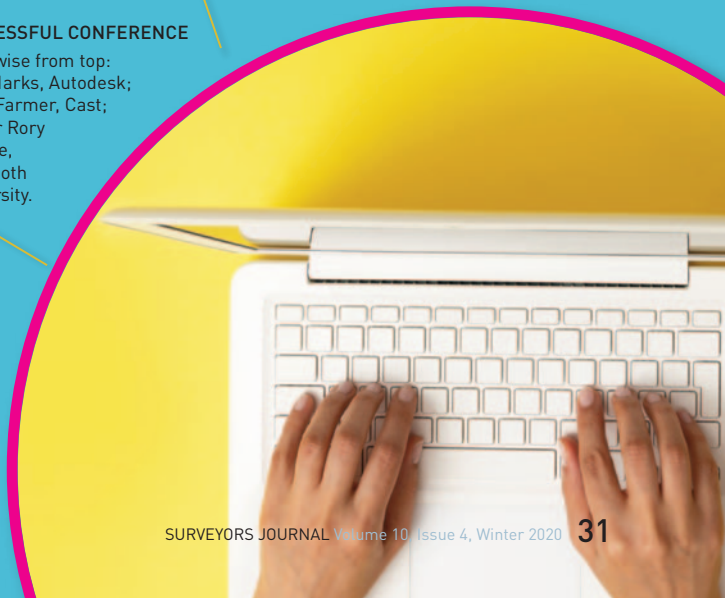
### Break-out sessions

Delegates at the conference could also attend a large number of concurrent break-out sessions throughout the morning, which covered topics such as: planning and adapting to change; research within practice; rapid change in property; family business workshop; information lifecycle; green leases; and procurement and contracts.

All of the conference sessions are available online at [www.dropbox.com/sh/pc33kvm61l73dgg/AABhkyG1RWlegC7XdEZnsDMya/Videos?dl=0&subfolder\\_nav\\_tracking=1](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pc33kvm61l73dgg/AABhkyG1RWlegC7XdEZnsDMya/Videos?dl=0&subfolder_nav_tracking=1).

### SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE

Clockwise from top: Amy Marks, Autodesk; Mark Farmer, Cast; and Dr Rory Hearne, Maynooth University.





# LIMERICK'S FUTURE

SINEAD RYAN IS A QUANTITY SURVEYOR AND PROJECT MANAGER WORKING AS PART OF THE LIMERICK TWENTY THIRTY PROJECT.

**A**fter completing a degree in Construction Economics from Limerick Institute of Technology, Sinead joined Davis Langdon PKS in Dublin, where she started her career as a quantity surveyor: "After several years, I returned home to Limerick and joined Enright Construction Consultants in 2005. I spent a number of years working with Cleary's Loss Assessors as a claims manager before joining Linesight in 2016. I spent four years working as a senior cost manager with Linesight before leaving and joining Limerick Twenty Thirty (LTT) in the summer of 2020".

At the moment, Sinead's work with LTT is focused on rejuvenating Limerick's Georgian core: "I am currently working as Project Manager on the Living Georgian Housing Project, which comprises two demonstration projects that aim to create a model for transforming Georgian Limerick properties into exciting, modern residential spaces. Working in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council's Urban Innovation Department, we are project managing the two 'pathfinder projects' to demonstrate new residential living in the historic Georgian core in Limerick".

Sinead explains that LTT is the first special-

purpose company wholly owned by a local authority and is tasked with planning and developing key strategic sites acquired by Limerick City and County Council during and in the aftermath of the downturn: "Our task is to develop these sites as anchors for enterprise and investment across Limerick. The company is managing the delivery of over €500 million in transformational investment in infrastructure across Limerick. It's largest project to date, the Opera Site, is about to commence and will be the premier, strategic city centre site in the programme and capable of meeting the requirements of inward investment and employment generation".

Some of the other major sites under LTT's control include Mungret Park and the Cleeves Riverside Quarter.

Sinead has the option of working remotely, onsite or in the office. The first thing she does every day is check her emails for any immediate issues: "A typical day would involve linking in with various design team members and client meetings. Although the [Georgian] project is at the early stages, the team is quite busy exploring design options and it hopes to submit a planning application for what is a really exciting project in 2021".



## Keeping active

When out of work and out of lockdown, Sinead enjoys keeping active with her family: "I live in Co. Limerick with my husband and two children. In my spare time I enjoy walking and cycling. When the current restrictions are lifted, I am looking forward to getting out on the Great Southern Greenway with the family for a cycle. I am also a regular on the sidelines at the Dromin Athlacca Under-8s hurling and football team matches".

Sinead says that LTT has a robust Covid-19 response plan in place, which is regularly reviewed and updated: "Covid-19 has dramatically changed the way of work for all. Since my involvement in this project, Covid-19 restrictions have been in place and everyone has adapted well in the circumstances, adhering to all the guidelines".

## SURVEYOR PROFILE

Colm Quinn  
Journalist and Sub-Editor,  
Think Media





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# SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE

A NEW PRIVATE SECTOR FORM OF CONTRACT  
HAS BEEN LAUNCHED.

In late October the SCSi, along with the Construction Industry Federation (CIF) and Engineers Ireland (EI), sponsored the launch of a new standard form of Private Sector Contract for Building Civil Engineering Works designed by the Employer. The new standard form is based on the Public Sector Works Contract but with several differences.

## Cross-industry support

The contract drafting was carried out over the past few years by Ciaran Fahy, Anthony Hussey, John Curtin, Ciaran MacIntyre and this writer. It was then brought to organisations that were supportive and circulated for comment by the various professional groups in each organisation. This led to several amendments and the agreement of the SCSi, CIF and EI to sponsor it.

## Fair and balanced

The new Conditions of Contract have been drafted with the objective of achieving a fair and balanced allocation of risk between the parties. They have also been drafted to provide some level of familiarity between the Public Sector Contract and the Private Sector Contract. While numerous amendments have been made to the original template, the structure and format of the Public Works Contract has been retained and, hopefully, this will allow for ease of use. The Conditions of Contract and its accompanying Agreement Form and Schedule are easily accessible as they are available electronically on each of the bodies' websites and there is no charge for using the form. It is hoped that, as a standard form, there are no amendments. The CIF has separately published a sub-contractor Form of Contract.

## TIMELINE FOR REMEASUREMENT BY CONTRACTOR IS 42 DAYS FROM COMPLETION.

## Standing committee

As with all new contracts it will take some time for acceptance and for suggested amendments to be made. A standing committee has been established with two representatives from each of the sponsoring bodies. The SCSi is represented by Tony McCauley and this writer. The standing committee can make the changes without seeking approval of each body. This should help speed up decision making.

## THE LAST WORD

Conor Hogan  
Director, Joseph C.  
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