

London and Home Counties Association Newsletter

Welcome to the February edition of the L&HC Association Newsletter.

This edition brings you some news of future events, a round up of events held since the last edition, some golf (its like marmite isn't it?!) and if you're feeling a little crafty there is a discount for you in here too.

Hope you will all find something of interest and as always, keen to hear from you if you have any suggestions for meetings or would like to submit an item or article you feel may be of interest to members for future editions, please get in touch. All suggestions or feedback gratefully received.

Due to a number of delays in the release of this issue I have re-written this section so many times I started with wishing you all a spooky Halloween, replaced by a warning of gun powder plots 'remember, remember the 5th of November' to festive celebrations. So fingers crossed I am not too late to wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year!

Charlotte.acutt@southwark.gov.uk

Conference 2019

Telford Internatiopnal Centre (or Tel Vegas) was inundated with all things revenues, rating, valuation and benefits for the national conference in October.

If you have never attended before, conference is an excellent opportunity to hear from top names in the industry sharing their insight into current and future concerns / direction, best practice and innovation; meet suppliers of cutting edge technology; mingle with peers from all sectors sharing ideas, forging partnerships, networks and for some... taking time out of reality!



At the AGM on 8th October a unanimous vote for change was heard to enable technician members to vote and stand for election to Council (As a technician member I was personally pleased to see the support of other categories of membership voting for this change).

Congratulations to Allan Clark (our treasurer), Gordon Heath, Roger Messenger and Kevin Stewart who were all re-elected to Council and are joined by new members Lisa Hayward and Simon Quilter.

We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Carla-Maria Heath on becoming the new Junior Vice President of IRRV and offer our sincere thanks to Louise Freeth for all her efforts during her presidential year.

Charity donation: During his LHC presidential year Andy Cummins raised a massive £2,000 for Christians Against Poverty (CAP) from our various social events and sponsors, including £1000 raised at his raffle at our annual dinner.



Andy Cummins and Dawn Stobart

Interestingly, Andy also said that he would raise additional funds, on the basis he would jump out of an aeroplane (strapped to a parachute and an instructor). Now we are yet to see any evidence of the jump / push / fall but have been promised it will happen. To be fair weather conditions have to be... well, fair and our lovely nation is famed for unpredictable weather and let's face it, lots of wind and rain and best laid plans never seem to work out!

Anyway, Andy took the opportunity of conference to present Dawn Stobart, Director of External Affairs at CAP with a whopper of a cheque. Congratulations to Andy, CAP are an extremely worthy cause.

(I promise as soon as the event has taken place, it will be evidenced in a future edition.)

As I am sure you are all aware, the highlight of conference is the performance awards dinner. This is not just an excuse to purchase a new frock and uncover the fancy suit (or buy a new one if you have one of those magic cupboards that shrinks your clothes!) well it is, but it is also a night to celebrate the hard work and commitment so many of us make in our day to day work and to recognise the achievements of our peers.

I have to confess I was amazed at the military operation required to ensure all finalists knew exactly what was going on, where they needed to be and at what time, everything had been thought of and this is a testament to the organisers who have developed as close to a fool proof plan as you can get.

I have no doubt there were some minor hitches on the night but I certainly didn't notice any and would like to say thank you to everyone that had a part in the organisation and the night.

After a lovely dinner and banter from the host we got down to the nitty gritty and the award winners were announced. It was a great evening for London and Home Counties with a massive 5 awards being picked up by those active in our association:

- Cushman & Wakefield** – Excellence in Non-Domestic Rate
- Elevate East London & London Borough of Barking & Dagenham** - Excellence in Partnership Working
- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council** – Excellence in Counter Fraud
- London Borough of Southwark** – Excellence in Innovation (Collection) & Revenues Team of the Year

Congratulations to all the winners and finalists



Cushman & Wakefield



Elevate East London & London Borough of Barking and Dagenham



Reigate and Banstead Borough Council



Southwark Council

Caption competition...



This snap of LHC secretary Chris Grose seemed perfect for a random caption competition.

Answers on a postcard to..... charlotte.acutt@southwark.gov.uk or secretary.lhc@irrvassociations.org.uk

(Just for fun but will publish the best in the next issue)

Dates for the Diary

New year, new calendar!!



We have a fantastic line up for you to get the new year off with a bang. A couple of dates are to be confirmed but we will keep you informed as soon as they are finalised..

12 Feb 6.30pm LHC Annual Quiz
Pavilion End, 23 Watling Street, London, EC4M 9BR
Matt Kelly will be donning his quiz master cap for another excellent evening of trivia



12 Mar 6.30pm London and Home Counties Annual Dinner
Innholders Hall, 30 College Street, London EC4R 2RH

21 Apr 5.30pm Revenues practitioners session
IRRV HQ, Northumberland House, 306 High Holborn, Holborn, London WC1V 7JZ
2 Representatives from local authority revenues will share guidance and best practice on; further recovery methods (as opposed to committal), and Valuation Tribunal cases

21 Apr 6.30pm AGM
IRRV HQ, Northumberland House, 306 High Holborn, Holborn, London WC1V 7JZ
Our 2019 AGM will be taking place directly following the Revenues Practitioners Sessions

Annual Quiz - sponsored by Rundles

Wednesday 12th February 6.30pm
The Pavilion End, 23 Watling Street, London EC4M 9BR

The annual quiz will again be held at The Pavilion End, 23 Watling Street, London EC4M 9BR. Why not come along and exercise the grey matter in the company of friends and colleagues. Matt Kelly is returning as quiz master offering varied rounds for all ages.

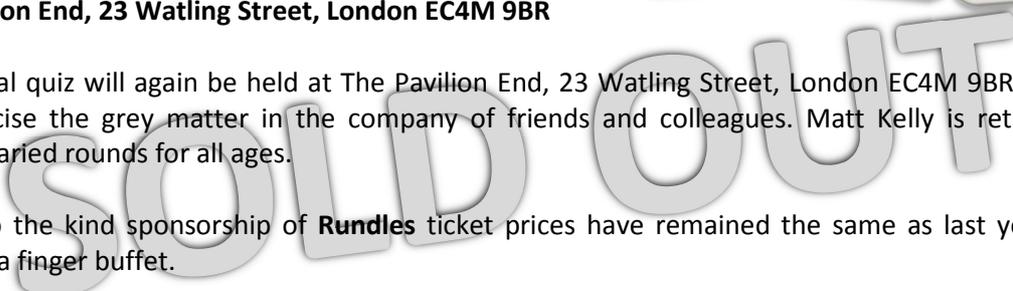
Thanks to the kind sponsorship of **Rundles** ticket prices have remained the same as last year at £10 per person including a finger buffet.

LHC Annual Dinner

Thursday 12th March 6.30pm
Innholders Hall, 30 College Street, London EC4R 2RH

For our Annual Association Dinner on Thursday 12th March 2020 we will be returning to the prestigious surroundings of the Innholders Hall (50 yards from Cannon Street, 200 yards from Bank underground).

This is a gourmet fine dining experience with appropriate wines to compliment each course. Thanks to the very generous sponsorship from **Analyse Local, Excel Civil Enforcement, JBW, Marston Holdings, Newlyn, Phoenix Commercial Collections, Rundles, TelSolutions, Ward Hadaway and Wilks Head Eve**, ticket prices have been held at the same as last year: £84 each including vat (IRRV members and one guest) or £144 each including vat (non-members), fully inclusive of all drinks before, during and after the meal.



The evening will begin with a reception at 6.30 p.m. and dinner will be served at 7.00 p.m. The evening will close by 11.00 p.m. Please indicate any special dietary requirements on the booking form (which will be circulated separately to members). The dress code is dinner jacket (black tie) preferred.

Places will be allocated strictly on a "first come" basis and tickets are not be issued. For further information contact our secretary at secretary.lhc@irrvassociations.org.uk

Revenues Practitioners Session, AGM, Wine Tasting

Wednesday 21st April from 5.30pm

IRRV HQ, Northumberland House, 306 High Holborn, Holborn, London WC1V 7JZ

Bunghole Cellars - 57 High Holborn, Holborn, London WC1V 6DT

On the evening of 21st April we are planning 3 events to run consecutively.

We will kick off with a valuable revenues practitioner session on; further recovery methods (as opposed to committal) presented by Heather Adeyemi from City of London and example Valuation Tribunal cases presented by Tayo Soyombo.

Directly followed by the AGM and culminating in a wine tasting event at Bunghole Cellars (a Davy's of London wine bar) located across the road from HQ.

Further details of the event will be circulated closer to the time and official notification of the AGM and associated documents will be issued to all members in due course.

Round up of past events

2019 Annual London & Home Counties Association golf tournament

Say what you will about golf but it is a very popular pastime and this particular event has been running for 15 years.

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of **Equita, Newlyn plc and Phoenix Commercial Collections Ltd** entrance fee remained at a very reasonable £25 per head and the day commenced with bacon butties and coffee on the terrace in the sunshine.

I for one had never attended a golf tournament before but offered to lend a hand on the day taking some photos, driving round in a golf buggy delivering refreshments and as VP, shake hands and pass out prizes at the end. Which was perfect as fate would have it, Friday 13 September was an absolutely glorious day which meant I pretty much sat around in the sunshine all day! Which actually led to the one and only complaint of the day as I had been side tracked by the weather and the comfy seats on the deck of the club house and the first team of golfers (who had been out the longest) were a tad thirsty when I finally caught up with them with some refreshments.

As the teams completed the 18th hole, scores were being totted up and compared. After a short break we sat down to a really lovely meal (compliments to the chef at Hendon Golf Club) before the winners were announced.

Congratulations to Stuart Potton for winning the overall tournament and to Matt Kelly for winning the LHC members shield.



I think all those in attendance will agree it was a great day and would join me in thanking our sponsors and Andy Cummins for organising the event year after year.



Andy Cummins & Stuart Potton



Andy Cummins, Matt Kelly, Charlotte Acutt

Post Summer Social

On the North bank of the river close to London Bridge sits the Oyster Shed offering lovely views across the Thames of the Southbank including the Shard. On 25th September this is where the post summer social was held thanks to the generous sponsorship of **Marston Holdings**.

A number of members and colleagues attended and whiled away the evening over nibbles and drinks talking all things revenues and rating and plenty that wasn't.

It was a great event to meet and mix with colleagues from across the industry.

Contingency Fees and the Expert Witness

On 5th November Andrew Hetherington, IRRV President, provided a talk of interest to all valuers on the subject of contingency fees in the Tribunal. It reflected the recent Upper Tribunal Lands Chamber decisions including Senova and advice of the procedures to be followed in both the Valuation Tribunal and Upper Tribunal. The talk was a helpful review of the recent comments by the Upper Tribunal on incentive based fees and the need for Independent Experts to remember their obligation to the Tribunal not the client. This was reinforced with commentary on the decision of the courts in the Liverpool Victoria case.

Many thanks to Andrew for taking time out of his busy timetable to present this talk, and to Southwark Council for providing the venue.

Breathing Space and HMRC data sharing pilot

On 8th November we trialled holding some events outside central London in the hope that this was more convenient for our members.

The sessions saw Vicki Alexander (Ward Hadaway) present on The Impact of Breathing Space on Enforcement and Andy Taplin (Southwark Council) on the process to date in relation to the data exchange pilot with HMRC.

The sessions took place in Dacorum in the morning and Croydon in the afternoon. The events were reasonably well attended and we may consider running events in these locations in the future. However, after running for trains and having a tight time frame we will not be attempting to run them on the same date again!

Valuer event – GL Hearn

This session held on 9th December, enabled valuers to get some final CPD hours in before the end of the year. Christopher Grose Secretary of London and Home Counties IRRV & Director of Business Rates at GL Hearn presented a review of legislation changes and recent cases, along with the proposals for amendments to business rates contained in the various manifestos for the General Election.

Geoff Fisher FIRRV past Council Member of IRRV provided an update on changes to the rules and regulations for valuers and the Red Book. After the event many of the attendees visited a local hostelry for refreshments

Many thanks to Chris and Geoff for their time and GL Hearn for providing the venue.

Calling all crafters.....

I'm pleased to advise following an introduction to another LHC member (Kelly) at conference we have contacted Wool Warehouse who are now offering a 10% discount to LHC IRRV members.



Enter discount code **WW10** for online purchases only

(Please note the code is not valid on sale items, yarn packs, Scheepjes products and Lopi products) There is currently no expiry date on this code.

Useful Links

The February edition of the [IRRV Newsletter](#)

Learn something new or add to your CPD points [IRRV Products and Services Brochure 2020](#)

VTS web site at <https://www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/>

Local government and social care ombudsman (England) <http://www.lgo.org.uk/>

Check out the London and South East Credit Circle at www.lsecc.org.uk

Your association.... your say..

Two of the items in this Newsletter are as a direct result of members suggestions, so if there is something you would be interested in or any suggestions you may have, please drop us a line;



Is there a particular type of event you would like us to organise?

Have you seen a recent speaker that you could recommend for a meeting?

Would you like to know more about the exec?

Would you be interested in hosting a meeting?

Anything else on your mind you think would be of benefit to members?

Just get in touch with secretary.lhc@irrvassociations.org.uk or charlotte.acutt@southwark.gov.uk

And finally a word to our sponsors

As I am sure you are aware we try and keep the cost to members for attending events to a minimum and we are only able to do this through the generous support of sponsors.

I'd like to take this opportunity to give a massive thank you to all our sponsors for your generosity during 2019. Without you we would not have been able to provide such a varied (and subsidised) calendar through out the year to our members.

Analyse Local
Equita
Excel Civil Enforcement
JBW
Marston Holdings
Newlyn
Phoenix Commercial Collections
Rundles
TELSolutions



If anyone would be interested in sponsoring an event in the future please get in touch with secretary.lhc@irrvassociations.org.uk