

Press Release

NEW OFFICERS FOR CHARTERED SURVEYORS' WESTERN REGION

New officers have been elected for the Western Region Group of the Society of Chartered Surveyors (SCS), Ireland's largest construction and property industry body, at its AGM in Galway Oranmore (Quality Hotel, Oranmore, Co. Galway).

Galway-based chartered quantity surveyor **Tomás Kelly ASCS MRICS M Phil** of Davis Langdon PKS, Galway city, has been elected its new chairman. He takes over from outgoing chairman, also from Galway, quantity surveyor **Martin O'Toole** of P.J. Hegarty & Sons, Galway city. The new vice-chairman is yet a third Galway man, with **Tomás Murphy**, a lecturer at G.M.I.T., Galway city, having been elected to the office.

Also elected at the AGM were **Paddy Dermody** of estate agents and valuers Sherry Fitzgerald McMahon, Ennis Co. Clare, who becomes the new honorary secretary, and **Matt MacEochaidh** of building contractors Glenman Corporation Ltd., the new honorary treasurer.

The SCS Western Region, which is run by a 7-person committee, represents over 200 chartered surveyor members spread throughout counties Clare, Donegal, Galway, Leitrim, Limerick, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo.

At its AGM, the outgoing chairman Martin O'Toole reported that the Western Region Group, which was set up in 2004 to serve local members better and provide greater educational and training facilities in the west of Ireland, had had a very successful third year.

"The Region continues to grow and provides an essential service to its members locally", he said. "A priority has been the staging of our own locally based CPD (Continuing Professional Development) programme to assist in the structured learning process which SCS members constantly undergo".

The regional committee continues to hold a CPD seminar, addressed by an invited speaker, monthly from October through to March. These focus on topics covering various areas, including legal, construction and other technical developments. “The programme has been extremely successful over the past year with an excellent schedule for the autumn and spring series well received and supported by members”, reported Mr. O’Toole.

He also said that there had also been continued growth of membership in the region through presentations made to students in third level education and other awareness programmes.

Announcing plans for the forthcoming year, the new chairman Tomas Kelly said that he planned to continue focusing on the CPD programme as well as the region’s work in further building its good links forged with other professional bodies and the regional third level educational institutions in the west.

“Another priority will be to continue encouraging members in the region to train as APC counselors and assessors”, he stated, saying that the west now has a number of trained APC assessors, and that “it’s our intention to continue to develop this area”.

The Western Region, as part of the educational process, is working towards arranging for local chartered surveying probationers to undertake the Assessment of Professional Competence in their own areas. This is the practical experience, which is mandatory for full qualification. “The number of candidates throughout the west applying for the APC Final Assessment continues to grow as a result of our direct awareness programme”, said Mr. Kelly, explaining that more qualified assessors are needed to provide for this growing number of probationers.

The new chairman also said that plans for the Western Region during the coming year included the convening of meetings to facilitate discussions on topical issues such as the Proposed Conditions of Engagement among others. Furthermore, he committed to carrying on his predecessors’ successful work in continuing to develop awareness amongst the public of the profession and also of the many varied types of work that chartered surveyors undertake, from property valuation to building and quantity surveying.

The Western Region was the second regional group to be formed by the SCS. It is aimed at generally developing the profession further in the west, taking account of the continued growth in demand for chartered surveyors throughout the country.

Those entering the chartered surveying profession from regional areas are strongly on the increase, as evidenced by the much higher number of graduates last year, which for the first time topped the 100 mark and saw greater numbers from outside Dublin and Cork. The Society has a Southern Region Group established some years ago.

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Note to editors: The Society of Chartered Surveyors is the largest body in Ireland representing both the construction and property industries. It now has over 1,700 qualified Chartered Surveyors and a further 800 students and probationers countrywide. Members include quantity, planning & development, building, rural and other specialist surveyors, as well as general practice surveyors working in the valuation area throughout Ireland.