



Call For Regulation Of Managing Agents From Newly Appointed Chairman

“I find it impossible to think of another sector where the management of peoples homes and literally hundreds of millions of pounds of their money is controlled by unregulated parties.” This was the key message put over by Duncan Rendall, the newly elected chairman of the Association of Residential Managing Agents (ARMA), at its 10th Annual Conference held 1st & 2nd November 2005 at Savoy Place in London.

Over the day and a half of the 2005 Annual Conference Duncan addressed some 700 delegates who are all involved in the management of long leasehold blocks of flats or estates. ARMA’s new chairman explained to them that:

“To date the government’s focus from a regulatory perspective has been to legislate ‘outcomes’ – and to provide means for lessees to challenge wrongdoing after the fact. However in my view the government’s energy would be far more effectively deployed by regulating the participants in the first place. By providing a regulator who could prevent an operator from acting as a managing agent, there would be a real sanction against those market participants who failed to act properly, and agents who entered the market place on a low-price opportunistic basis would think twice before proceeding. I think ARMA should continue to press for regulation. In pursuit of this objective we should, I believe, seek to develop further our existing links with government.”

Duncan went on to state that until such statutory regulation is introduced in England and Wales ARMA would continue to act as the self-regulatory body for those professional managing agents that are able to meet the Association’s strict entry criteria and the ongoing membership requirements and standards.

ARMA’s conference was celebrating its 10th anniversary and the chairman and new vice-chairman, Brett Williams of Curry & Partners in Birmingham, were pleased to greet and host colleagues from Scotland, Ireland, Australia and Japan as well as representatives from the Government and fellow trade and professional bodies.

Of the many presentations one, on lone working, by The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, was regarded as of great importance along with a session run by the Metropolitan Police on security issues. Delegates were exhorted in a number of

sessions to market their professionalism and promote the benefits to landlords and lessees of only using ARMA members to manage their properties; and other sessions dealt with what ARMA is doing to represent lessees interests with regard to a whole raft of new legislation that is likely to affect them personally.