



# DAVIDSON & ROBERTSON

CHARTERED SURVEYORS • LAND AGENTS • VALUERS

# Autumn Bulletin

ISSUE 22 / Nov 2017

News from offices across Scotland & Northern England

## Growing assets – more places, more people, more skills

A year ago, we were celebrating our 125th anniversary. We're proud of our heritage, but are forward thinking and always looking for new opportunities for our clients and our business.

**NEW OFFICES:** In 2017 we opened three more offices; Berwick in January, Lanark branched moved to the town centre in June and in October we opened our Ayr office at the Livestock Auction Mart, Whitefordhill. We have a strong presence in South West Scotland and with an expanded team, it puts us in closer contact with existing and new clients.

We now have nine offices across Scotland and Northern England. [Read more about our new Ayr office inside.](#)



Full team ahead!

**Growing our team and developing skills.** We're not just about increasing our numbers, we're about developing the talent in our team - investing in our people and effectively 'growing our own'. Find out more about our people in Team Talk on the back cover.

**Sharing knowledge that adds value to your business.**

We have a team of professionals that provide clients with services across the wide range of rural property

issues; from Valuations and Sales, Compulsory Purchase Settlements and Dispute Resolution to Planning and Development, Agricultural and Forestry Consultancy. Read on inside to see some of the areas we've covered recently.



**Great Glen Challenge winners**



**Tripling land and property sales**



**New office opens in Ayr**



## GROWING BUSINESS

# New Ayr office Boosts South West Scotland Presence

Our newest office in Ayr opened for business in October, strengthening our position in South West Scotland. We have new members of staff with years of experience that will allow us to extend our services:



### Meet the team:



**Andy Robertson** (Land Agent) and Doreen Richmond (Senior Administrator), will be permanently based at the 'Ayr office' and Derek Bathgate (Associate Director) will be managing this branch alongside the office in Castle Douglas. Molly Beattie (Rural Assistant) joins us to support both offices. With the wider

D&R team in support, the new Ayr office can offer Land Agency, Valuations, Agricultural and Forestry Consultancy services.

**Andy Robertson** was brought up on a beef and sheep farm in Ayrshire. He studied agriculture at SAC, Auchincruive. Andy worked for SGRPID for 10 years and as a Land Agent with Bell Ingram for 4 years. He intends to gain Fellowship of the CAAV.

Andy's hands-on farming experience is a significant benefit to his land agency work and services he can provide to clients. His specialisms include access negotiations with 3rd parties, Farm Consultancy including IACS, agri-environment and other grant applications, Utility work and CPO compensation claims.



**Doreen Richmond** is our Senior Administrator. She has a wealth of experience in finance and administration management in the rural property sector, allowing us to introduce a **NEW Book Keeping service.**

**Molly Beattie** gained an HNC in Rural Business and a first-class BSc(Hons) in Applied Animal Science at SRUC Edinburgh. Molly joined us after working for SAC Disease and Surveillance.



**Call in to meet our team at the Livestock Auction Mart, Whitefordhill. T: 01292 265 851.**



## Lanark – growth

The move to Lanark town centre has increased our visibility. We have seen a surge in rural residential work, appraising property and plots of land. **Contact Niall Milner on 01555 66 66 55.**

## Celebrating Five Years in Forfar!



### Happy birthday.

D&R has been in Forfar since 2012, firstly within the Forfar Mart, then moving to North Street in 2014. Rhona Booth, Associate Director at Davidson & Robertson, has run the Forfar office since it opened. Rhona has since been joined by two more members of staff including Kathleen Brewster and more recently Murray Philp who brings with him an expertise in Forestry. **Contact Rhona Booth on 01307 490 220.**



## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

# Bridging the gap – client compensation both sides of the Forth



**Dozens of D&R clients on both sides of the Forth faced negotiations to obtain compensation for access to, or purchase of land affected by, the Forth Replacement Crossing Project.**

We guided clients through a myriad of issues related to Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO's) on the Forth Project. D&R agents have acted for clients in every major rural CPO scheme in



**MD Martin Hall and son Will**

Scotland during the last 20 years and more recently in Northern England. We are currently engaged with the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route; the Maybole, Dalry and Beith bypasses; the Borders Railway, the A9, M8 and M80 network improvements. We are also heavily involved in the United Utilities West Cumbria Water Supply Project in Cumbria.

The new Queensferry Crossing opened in September and whilst the new bridge road connections are the obvious end result, our work advising clients began in 2008 and still continues.

## Experts in securing the best deal for clients

D&R professionals are experts when it comes to land or property acquisition - especially relating to compulsory purchase or where land has been injuriously affected. This can be anything from the loss of garden ground to the compulsory purchase of entire fields. *Injurious affection* can often be a very subtle negotiation in terms of gaining fair compensation. Taking small areas of a field can have a huge impact on the cost effectiveness of operations for the farmer, this is where our agricultural expertise and understanding come to the fore. For some clients, land development potential can be diminished due to being near to new road systems and we can secure fair compensation in relation to this.

Experience tells us there will be much to do for clients involved with dualling the A9, A96 and the A66 in Northern England. If you are facing any form of land or property purchase or contractors or utility companies require access to your land get in touch. **Contact your local office or Martin Hall in Edinburgh on 0131 449 6212.**

## A strong year for Agency Sales

**It's been an incredible year. D&R has handled three times more sales for the year to date in comparison to 2016, including farms, woodlands and lifestyle properties on the open market and privately.**

Of the 27 brought to market in 2017, 19 are sold/under offer and

achieved 20% more than the original 'offers over' or guide price.

**Looking to sell in 2018? Time to plan ahead**

At D&R we are always looking for ways to improve sale opportunities for clients. Embracing new technology has helped us increase property



sales, aided by innovative use of drone filming and photography it gives potential buyers a better feel for the property. **Visit our D&R page on You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odSHv7Istis> or contact your local office.**



## ADDING VALUE FOR OVER 125 YEARS

### Negotiating communications site leases – code changes December 2017

Improving rural broadband and phone reception is on the horizon. After a long period of relative inactivity with regards to new communications infrastructure, we are about to enter a new period of expansion.

A new Electronic Communications Code, which provides a framework for how telecoms operators can acquire sites (to install and maintain copper telephone wires, fibre optic cables and telecoms masts), is set to come into force in December.

Under the new Code, market value will be a key consideration when setting a site rent and

has been welcomed by site owners and their agents.

Expert advice, from a land agent experienced in the communications sector, should be sought when engaging with communications providers. This will be especially important at the start when the new Code is bedding in and, with precious few comparables, market value is likely to be difficult to calculate. Network operators could pressurise non-represented landowners into a deal that is not reflective of the market, impacting on rents going forward.



Rhona Booth



It is helpful, for both parties, if a suitably qualified Land Agent is involved in negotiations at an early stage. Network operators are almost always willing to meet agents' fees for lease negotiations, meaning there is no cost to the landowner for expert advice. **Contact your local office or Rhona Booth in Forfar on 01307 490 220.**

### Energy Storage – Diversified income option for Landowners

Opportunities for diversified income for landowners from energy storage are out there with improvements in battery and gas turbine technology, providing short term operating reserve (STOR) at times of peak demand from the grid.

Battery storage sites consist of custom built shipping containers. So long as they are located adjacent to, or near, 11kv or 33kv powerlines or substations with sufficient excess transmission capacity then the site can be in the corner of a field. Hardstanding or former quarries with up to



Gervase Topp

an acre of level ground and good access are ideal. Gas turbine sites have an additional requirement of proximity to a gas mains supply.

The market is relatively undeveloped and there are opportunities to negotiate good rents. Agreements tend to be for 25 years with rents based on the export capacity of the site as well as the cost of grid connection. They can be up to £1,350 per MW for battery sites and more for gas turbine sites with professional costs met by developers. **Contact your local office or Gervase Topp in Maud on 01771 613 717.**

### Shooting Rights and Deer Forests – the rateable value

Non-domestic rates for shooting rights and deer forests have been reintroduced. Farm businesses and/or land owners are being issued with a Valuation Notice from the Assessors stating the rateable value that has been applied. It will be followed by a Business Rate Bill issued by the local authority, stating the amount to be paid. There may be **100% relief** from the Scottish Government under the Small Business Bonus Scheme if the total combined rateable value for the whole business is up to £15,000. **Contact your local office or Isla Shand in Maud on 01771 613 717.**



## WHAT'S ON: SUPPORTING CROSS SECTOR NATIONAL EVENTS

# Sponsoring the Scottish Rural Awards

D&R is proud to sponsor the Agriculture category of the Scottish Rural Awards 2018. These national awards are the ultimate benchmark of excellence in Scotland's countryside – a celebration of the enterprise, innovation, dedication and community spirit of those who live and work in rural Scotland. This is the fourth year of the awards and our first year as sponsor. Good luck to all those nominated or attending the award ceremony on 22nd March at Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh.



## Meet us at AgriScot – Royal Highland Centre 15th Nov



We'll be at Stand 106 in the Highland Hall, come meet the D&R team.

It's a chance to catch up with our rural professionals over light refreshments.

**Attend our Seminar: Farming with Forestry** D&R Forestry Manager Iain Kyle and George Hipwell will be explaining how forestry/woodlands can integrate with modern-day farming to provide an income and a valuable asset. Chartered Surveyor George Hipwell is a Fellow of the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers and runs our Bathgate office. Iain Kyle has extensive experience in forestry and planting and talks in laymen's terms. Does tree planting represent good investment for you? From grant applications and Forestry Management to Tree Planting and Harvesting, you can ask D&R's team for specific advice and chat through your potential project after the presentation. **Contact George Hipwell on 01506 811 812 or Iain Kyle on 01900 268 633.**

# AgriScot

The Farm Business Event



## LiveScot – Lanark 25th November 2017

D&R is sponsoring LiveScot 2017 an annual event led by the Scottish National Fat Stock Club and held at the Lanark Agricultural Centre. We are sponsoring The Heavyweight Beef Cattle Championship. There'll be a strong presence of D&R staff on hand, so look out for the D&R grey gilets.



## Use It or Lose It – FAS Tenants' Improvements Amnesty Events

Our MD Martin Hall will be speaking at events organised by The Scottish Government's Farm Advisory Service (FAS) to inform tenant farmers/landowners about changes to tenancy legislation including the Tenants' Improvements Amnesty.

**Wednesday 29 November**  
Greenvale Golf Academy, New Luce Road, Stranraer, DG9 8SQ

**Thursday 30 November**  
The Fenwick Hotel, Fenwick, Kilmarnock, KA3 6AU

## Growing our own

Our Human Resource strategy is to recruit people who understand our clients' and fit our business culture - nurturing them and growing their knowledge and expertise. We encourage our staff to advance their career: We have Rural Assistants doing day-release or distance learning programmes focussed on converting their Bachelor degrees to RICS Accredited status, Graduate Surveyors about to undertake their RICS Assessment of Professional Competence to become Chartered Surveyors, and Land Agents and qualified Surveyors preparing to sit the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers exams to attain Fellowship (FAAV) status of this professional body.

**Learning on the job: Kirsten Tait** studied Rural Business Management (RBM) at SRUC Edinburgh, graduating in 2014 with an honours degree. Unfortunately, her course achieved RICS accreditation after she graduated. Kirsten joined D&R as a Rural Assistant and supported by us, she completed a day release conversion course to achieve RICS Accreditation. Now promoted to Graduate Surveyor, Kirsten is also enrolled on the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC).



**“ D&R give their graduates a varied workload which shows us all aspects of the job which is hugely beneficial when working towards the APC. ”**

**University placement: Thomas Graham** was brought up on a small dairy farm in Cumbria. He has joined D&R for his placement year from Harper Adams University, where he is studying Rural Enterprise and Land Management. Thomas has been getting involved in a wide range of private client work across Cumbria including Sales and Valuations, Forestry Management, Utilities, and Landlord & Tenant matters.



**“ The United Utilities west coast water supply pipeline is keeping us really busy and I've already gained some invaluable commercial experience working on various land and property sales too. ”**

## New staff in Edinburgh:



**Gillian Ferguson**



**Mary-Ann Hume**

**Gillian Ferguson** is a Graduate Surveyor with a qualification in building conservation and experience working with traditional buildings throughout Scotland. She joins us having completed a Master's Degree in Land Economy (Rural Surveying and Rural Property Management) at the University of Aberdeen. Gillian is working towards becoming a Chartered Surveyor and a Fellow of the CAAV.

**Mary-Ann Hume** joined us as PA to Managing Director Martin Hall. She has over 15 years' experience working in rural property agency and management.

**If you are interested in a career with D&R, contact Fiona Mackay in Edinburgh on 0131 449 6212 or [FM@drrural.co.uk](mailto:FM@drrural.co.uk)**



## It's fun building teamwork...

Adventurous endeavours help build teamwork and raise money for charity. This summer we entered 3 teams in the **RSABI Great Glen Challenge**. We're proud that a third of our company participated and we 'we nailed it', coming first, middle and last. We also raised £3,120 for RSABI.