



The Board of Propertymark puts members at the heart of its vision for the future

propertymark

The Board of Propertymark, predominantly made up of member-elected agents, is under no illusion of the importance that the housing market plays to the economy and as such what our vital members do collectively for society. UK Governments have also shown how fundamental the property market is over the last year by making it one of the very first sectors to be given a green light during lockdown when so many others on our high streets remained closed.

Whilst the housing sector's contribution is clear and profound, the context in which it sits is both complex and dynamic and is at the forefront of economic troughs and peaks that can be tricky to navigate. Take the commercial market for example, which has been among the hardest hit by the pandemic. Retailers have been forced to shut and many business leaders are reviewing their longer-term requirements as office workers prefer not to return to a five-day commute. This is driving commercial landlords to reassess their portfolios, which in turn is giving rise to opportunities for developers to invest in property conversions and creating future residential sales and lettings. Taking just one property within even this basic scenario, can potentially lead to property agents across a number of disciplines interacting and supporting the chain of events. These agents, commercial, valuers, auctioneers, sales, letting and inventories, are all valuable members of Propertymark.

We know how important it is that we understand the challenges and opportunities within the marketplace. It is in that context that we are sharing our vision for Propertymark. A vision that positions us as a professional body, that has members at the heart of everything we do. One that creates an organisation with a recognised single brand, has members who aspire to reach high standards and is the provider of choice for qualifications. An organisation which provides membership benefits and services that are relevant to both individual agents and to businesses with members' voices not only heard but carrying real influence across all the UK nations, providing platforms and opportunities to share knowledge both locally and nationally. We are already well advanced in bringing this strategy to life and are focused on four key pillars which are completely centred around our members.

① VALUED MEMBERSHIP SERVICE

We know that the needs of our members are constantly evolving. The property sector has positively embraced technology and new ways of working. Our expanding programme of webinars, blogs, factsheets and integrated regional networks provide a continuous source of information and guidance, but we must ensure our members are able to access these through the channels they use on a daily basis. We need to stay relevant to our members and genuinely listen to their needs. That is why we have created a cross disciplined Industry Steering Group to carry through a full review of our membership proposition and we are asking all members to contribute. We will value the contribution of all the professional disciplines within our membership no matter how big or small. Through this work we aim to understand and support our members' needs by tailoring our services and products for both individual agents and the organisations they work for.

② BEING THE RECOGNISED INDUSTRY VOICE

Being THE industry voice is built on a bedrock of membership engagement and feedback. By aggregating what we learn, we are able to provide a credible and influential voice to demonstrate how our members are impacted by the constantly changing legislative and political landscape. Gathering and sharing data, evidence and insight from within the industry and on the ground, has enabled us to persuade UK governments to make tangible changes that impact and benefit the sector and most importantly our members. For example, achieving business rate relief during the pandemic has equated to saving £210,000,000 for members across the country. This will remain an integral part of our work and we will look to work in partnership with others to further increase our reach and influence.

③ RECOGNISED INDUSTRY STANDARDS

Our members tell us that they strive to reach the highest standards and want consumers to be able to differentiate between them and rogue agents. Industry standards are a clear competitive differentiator as well as a pathway for career progression and commitment to continued learning and development. By providing a strong and recognisable symbol of professionalism, underpinned by a robust Code of Practice and a modern qualification offer, Propertymark will continue to support members seeking to gain an accreditation and raise industry standards. We are also very clear in our intent for Propertymark to play a key role in the future regulatory structure, whenever that comes about.

④ FUTURE PROOFING PROPERTYMARK

Propertymark must be agile and adapt to the market in which we operate. That is why we are investing in enhancing our systems and digital technologies to ensure we have the right infrastructure in place to serve members going forward. It is also important we look after our people, particularly in these unprecedented times, and that we foster a culture of openness and transparency as we take the organisation forward.

These four pillars embody our current and future ambitions for members but there is more to come and plenty to be done. Together with our membership we will continue to grow our organisation into one that consumers recognise and our members are proud to be part of. There has never been a better time to be a member of Propertymark.

We welcome input from all our stakeholders. If anyone would like to discuss this further, they can contact us at mtsang-wetherald@propertymark.co.uk