

## **PROPERTY MANAGERS ASSOCIATION SCOTLAND LTD**

### **Response to The Herald article of 20 August 2007: Watchdog wants property factors shake-up..... by Gerry Braiden.**

The Property Managers Association Scotland Ltd is in total agreement that accreditation of those engaged within the property management industry is important and indeed the PMAS was represented on the Housing Improvement Task Force and Working Party, on record as speaking in favour of the introduction of an accreditation scheme.

As is the case in most industries, including journalism, politics, finance, plumbing, you name it, there is a majority of those with high standards and good repute cast into the shadows as the spotlight inevitably falls upon those whose standards are questionable. Sadly the activities of those highlighted in that spotlight tend to tarnish the excellent reputations of those quietly going about their business.

Such is the case with members of the Property Managers Association Scotland Ltd. Members manage more than 150,000 properties and PMAS receives only around 180 to 200 complaints about its members each year, not all of which are with foundation.

Often property managers or “factors” become the scapegoat between both those owners who accept their responsibilities and those who do not. It is clear that essential information about the deed of conditions for a property including how the manager is appointed, the manager’s role, remit and responsibilities and how the manager can be changed, is often not provided to owners by their solicitors at the time of purchase. Yet these are the conditions affecting the biggest financial commitment an individual is likely to make.

In today’s property-conscious world the role of the property manager is so important. Property managers are engaged by property owners of all kinds, individuals and companies, to provide a management or factoring service within their client’s budget. Their remit can include everything from replacing light bulbs on stairwells to cutting the grass or even carrying out major repairs. The service is provided by negotiation of requirements and financial commitment of the owners.

Where provided for in the appointment of the property manager, regular property checks are carried out and recommendations made by property managers although final decisions and responsibility for necessary works remain in the hands of owners. Property managers are exactly that, managers. They are not owners, they are not bankers for property owners and they are not city bursars able to fund repairs or projects at will.

There are occasions when property managers are sympathetic to temporary hardship and in the interests of health and safety will negotiate amenable terms for property owners but in general the role of the property manager is to maintain property within the agreed budget of the owner.

Again the role of the property manager is to report to the owner the requirements of the common parts of the building both in terms of necessary work identified by the

inspection and the general maintenance programme for the period until the next inspection.

The property manager also has a further responsibility to the contractors engaged by him on behalf of the owners. Contractors are engaged on the express understanding that they are leading professionals who have demonstrated their abilities. By the same token, contractors carry out their work on the further express understanding that they will be paid in full and within an agreed time. They are happy to work with property managers in preference to individual property owners because they have the confidence that they will be respected as professionals and paid promptly. It is this kind of tried and trusted business relationship that works for the benefit of property owners.

Just as it is without question quite essential to be registered with a dentist for regular servicing, for such repairs as may be necessary and to be able to get help in an emergency. Property managers provide the same support, an essential service for those seeking peace of mind with regard to the upkeep of their property.

An individual would not register with a dentist who is not answerable to a health organisation so property owners and residents would be best advised to seek property managers who are members of the government-acknowledged Property Managers Association Scotland Ltd which does not profess to be a disciplining governing body but can substantiate the qualifications of its members and will expel members not conforming to its high code of practice and work standards. Members of PMAS have an overall responsibility for more than 150,000 property units throughout Scotland, a tribute to the esteem held by its members within the property profession.

The PMAS policy is one of co-operation with the Scottish Executive and others to totally eradicate the ability of rogue factors to tarnish the reputation of the true professionals in this field and thus provide residents with confidence that their homes are indeed in very good and caring hands.

\*\*\* Further information please contact Bernard Bale at Beeline Media on 01472 599916 or [bernard246@btinternet.com](mailto:bernard246@btinternet.com) or Jamie Millar of Property Managers Association Scotland on 0141-245-6779 or [jamie.millar@brodies.co.uk](mailto:jamie.millar@brodies.co.uk)