

## DeVarga COMMENTARY – October 2016

### When is a Loss of £4.00 Good Value for Money?

We reinstated the annual DeVarga Race Day on 7<sup>th</sup> September at Kempton Park. Many attended, all had fun. Notable attendees were HSBC Bank and Handelsbanken (two of the best Banks in the UK), Acorn (the best Estate Agent in south-east London), Richard Cook Ltd (one of the most impressive property development firms I have ever met), Kenyon's (best Estate Agency firm in Carshalton and Sutton), Morgan Accountants (best financial adviser bar none), Dollman & Pritchard (a very impressive and sharply minded legal firm, based in Caterham), Silverleaf Group (outstanding property developer focusing on Croydon and surrounding areas), William Croxson & Son Ltd (modestly describing themselves as bottle-washers but one of the best Companies at manufacturing bottles to hold the best 'red and white' around), a dark horse (pardon the pun) who will be part of a new Bank due to open in Spring 2017 (watch this space for a very "civilised" entry into the world of banking), staff of DeVarga, and some late entries in the form of the Martin family who claimed right of attendance due to birth.

Non-starters (pardon the pun) were, Lesley Webber (sharpest property legal brain in GB), Titan Construction (one of the most impressive facilities' management Company in England), Kent Space Self Storage (storage kings – move aside Big Yellow, you have a tough competitor), David Sayer (best architect in the UK), Peter Laskowski of Ealing's Smiles (the nation's finest dentist), his wife Ania (landscape gardener extraordinaire), Rod Cooke (former banking supremo, now worldwide author) and his better half, Deidre. My special thanks to Chrissy Marshall of Sensible Pencil who managed to capture the spirit of the day and the individuals with his character sketches. Modesty forbids me from producing copies of them in this newsletter. As for me, £4.00 down on the day – a good result.

I wish to finish by addressing what is going on at DeVarga. I perceive, given earlier newsletters, that we may be seen to be moving away from our core business of property advice. No so. In fact, the opposite is the case. I'm delighted to advise that we have received Planning Permission to extend our office building. Work is expected to start late-2016/early 2017. The end result will be a larger office for us which will enable us to take on more surveying staff in spring 2017, which we desperately need. A possible candidate has already been identified. An additional secretary will be joining us this month. This move fits in nicely with the internal reorganisation presently under way. We are, and continue to be Chartered Surveyors, offering good, solid, common sense advice to our clients. My role in this is to oversee the change from acting as the main Surveyor to acting as main supervisory Surveyor. It's called medium to long-term planning for possible succession. To support that change I am focusing on ADR, a more profitable side of the business. Someone asked me the other day are you going to practice as a Lawyer? Answer = absolutely not. The ADR experience and, hopefully, my future LLB qualification is designed to complement, support and embrace a firm offering Chartered Surveying advice but, from time to time, bringing with it a legal brain. I think that is unique. We are building on a property platform, not jumping off one. Chartered Surveyors we have always been, Chartered Surveyors we are today, and Chartered Surveyors we will always be.

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