

DeVARGA COMMENTARY – DECEMBER 2015

Another Pina Colada Please

There have been some interesting developments in the Practice in the last two to three years, and I write to bring you 'up to speed'.

Dispute Resolution, Arbitration and Independent Expert work (ADR) on property matters is now taking up a large amount of time in my working life. To enhance that client service I have decided to return to University in 2016 and, via distance learning, obtain a Law Degree specialising in Dispute Resolution. Fortunately, this involves attending the odd weekend training course which to me is good news as a Pina Colada is cheap on campus!

With all this going on around us we took a hard critical look at our 'bread and butter' income – what I term as the primary reason for our existence – giving good common sense advice to all our clients on property matters. Recognising the increasing workload in ADR, and the increased demand for property advice, I have over the last 6 to 12 months passed much of the valuation work and management of DeVarga over to Simon Barnes.

For those of you who have not met Simon, he came into DeVarga about three years ago. I quickly saw in him someone who had the ability to take DeVarga 'by the throat', so to speak; to take it to its next logical level and provide a better service on non-ADR matters and grow that side of the business. I have not been disappointed. With Simon at the helm it has grown and I see it growing further. The reason is a simple one. Simon is a better Surveyor than me. I have no doubt he will continue to be a growing part of the Practice. I look forward to continuing to developing the current successful 'partnership' with him.

I conclude by saying our offices will be closed for the 2015 festive season from 17:00 hours on Wednesday, 23rd December 2015, re-opening at 09:00 hours on Monday, 11th January 2016. In the intervening period we will still monitor e-mails and telephone messages, and should you need anything to be actioned your best option is to speak to Simon in the first instance or, in his absence, Mary Hall or Ann Whiteside.

As for myself, this year I have not drawn 'the short straw' and will, therefore, be absent on leave, surfing the waves and catching fish in New Zealand from 21st December returning to the office on 1st February 2016. I will have my mobile with me but, for some unknown reason, most of the places I am going to do not provide access to the mobile phone networks. Shame.

It only remains to thank you for your support during 2015 which, speaking personally, ends on what I think is a very positive note. I wish you well in 2016.

Matthew S Martin FRICS FCI Arb