



Society of Actuaries in Ireland

Newsletter

DECEMBER 2018

Inaugural President's Conference



From left to right: Aisling Kennedy, Maurice Whyms, Tom Dunne, Roma Burke

The first President's Conference of the Society of Actuaries in Ireland was held in the Shelbourne Hotel on the morning of 8 November with a theme of "Towards a Fairer Future". There was a focus on the health, housing and pensions issues confronting Irish society with the Conference discussing new initiatives to meet the needs of current and future generations in these areas. The backdrop to the discussion was the wider issue of intergenerational equity and how this may influence the decisions we take today.

Our speakers on the day were Aisling Kennedy FSAI on Health, Tom Dunne on Housing and Roma Burke FSAI on Pensions. Amongst the points made were the growing need to combat anti-microbial bacteria resistance to protect our health system, the platform that social housing represents for the welfare state and the need to build more social housing and a proposal to allow borrowing from one's pension scheme for significant lifetime events in order to make pensions investment more attractive. The presentations are available on the [Society's website](#) together with a podcast and also the two press releases that the Society issued in conjunction with the Conference.

A key objective of the Conference was to highlight to external stakeholders the breadth of the expertise of the actuarial profession in Ireland, with our ability to contribute across a range of different issues. Accordingly, there was a strong emphasis on ensuring that the Conference engaged an external audience and was not solely internally focused. In that regard, we were very pleased that the audience of some 250 attendees included guests from government, the regulatory bodies, the insurance and pensions industry and from professions we engage with on a regular basis.

The event was hosted by our President Maurice Whyms who also led the panel discussion. In addressing the Conference, Maurice noted *"Our theme "Towards a Fairer Future" brings to the fore the principle of Intergenerational Equity, ensuring we address the needs of today in a way which balances our needs with those of our children and grandchildren. Against a backdrop of major challenges such as climate change, declining dependency ratios, improvements in longevity (a good thing) and technological transformation, the Society believes it is essential we take a long-term view on many of the societal and environmental issues we face."*

There was very good feedback from both members and guests to this new event, and our thanks to all those involved in the significant organisation required to hold it.

Sean Casey, Vice-President

See page 5 for more photos from the conference

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Fellowship Ceremony November 2018



Back to Front, left to right: Mark Sexton, Shane Tomkins, Niamh Walsh, Sean Burke, Orla McManamly, Ciara O'Brien, Gavin McGrath, Alan McDonagh, Stephen O'Brien, Rhiannan McKernan, Niamh O'Briain, Stephen Doherty, Donna Whelan, Stephanie Maxwell, Sophie Connolly, Maria Sheehan, Niall Kilroy, Brian Bradley, Orla Gleeson, Jennifer Rogers, Claire Brennan, Meg O'Rourke, Damien Small, Tim Maher, Laura Behan, Nehdia Akram, Ciara Browne, Grainne McCosker, Maurice Whyms (SAI President), Shane Gilroy, Donna McGinty

Banking & Aviation Finance Committee: Networking Evening



The Banking and Aviation Finance Committee networking evening took place in October at the Davenport Hotel. It was well attended by over 80 Fellow and Student members across different areas of practice. The committee, which is a sub-committee of the Wider Fields committee, proudly invited nine enthusiastic speakers with actuarial backgrounds who are currently working in the Banking and Aviation Finance industry.

The speakers occupying the eight stands at the event were Justin Brayden, Joe Brennan, Louise Gallen, Donal O'Brien and Treasa Mescal from leading aviation finance companies across the globe as well as Don Browne, Niall Dillon,

Cormac O'Leary and Mairead O'Shea from the largest Irish banks in the market.

Bryan O'Connor, the chair of the Committee, welcomed the speakers and the audience to the networking evening. The event was set up as a "speed dating" format – each attendee was allocated to one of eight groups upon entering the room. The groups rotated between eight speaker stands every eight minutes, at the ring of a bell. Brian Donnellan, the coordinator of the night, kindly agreed to operate the bell. Also, a special word of thanks to Yuecong Wang (Adia) who played a key role in designing and organising this inaugural event.

The speakers shared with each group their experience on their career transition. To inspire the audience, each speaker also prepared a well-presented slide on their professional fields in Banking or Aviation Finance, highlighting the actuarial skills used in their day-to-day work. The audience groups had been encouraged to actively engage in the discussions and there was no shortage of questions for the speakers.

The evening finished with a drink reception and finger food, where the audience had the opportunity to have follow-up discussions with the speakers and share thoughts with their peers.

This "speed dating" style networking event is the first of its kind being held by the Society. Special thanks go to our exceptional speakers, who put great time and effort into this evening to share their thoughts and experiences with the fellow Society members.

Feedback received indicates that continuing to host events like this, on a periodic basis, with a variety of presenters (each with varying levels of experience), supports members' mobility into new and emerging sectors a great deal. Applying the actuarial skillset to forecasting / capital models within, say the banking sector, piggybacking off large datasets and the freedom to move into wider fields, is something that is appealing to actuaries also.

The speaker slides from the networking event are available on the Society's website [here](#).

Bruce Maxwell:

Actuary – Role Model – Friend – Gentleman – Family Man



On 26th October 2018, Bruce Maxwell, Past President of the Society of Actuaries in Ireland, passed away after a long illness. He will be remembered as a man who selflessly gave his time, his money, his expertise, indeed his heart and soul, to many causes.

Bruce was born and reared in Clontarf, Co. Dublin. An outstanding student, he was also an avid sportsman, playing football, hockey and cricket – and he played the euphonium in a Brass Band!

After studying at Trinity College, Bruce joined Irish Life as a trainee actuary. David Harney, CEO at Irish Life Group, said: "In his 37 years in Irish Life, including 18 years as Chief Actuary, Bruce earned the respect, trust, admiration and warm affection of all his colleagues across the company. He will be remembered as a true gentleman who encouraged, challenged and probed with an affable smile. He was a man of high integrity, principles and ambition and he inspired a generation of Irish actuaries. Bruce was also a proud family man and we are lucky that his two daughters, Stephanie and Lauren, continue to fly the Maxwell flag in Irish Life."

I was lucky enough to have Bruce as my first manager. He was always approachable, a great coach, hugely supportive of his team,

and he cultivated a very positive working atmosphere through his openness, good humour and kindness.

Bruce was passionate about developing the actuarial profession. He served as President of the Society in 1997/1999 and the foundations he laid continue to guide us. He went on to serve as Chairman of the Actuarial Association of Europe in 2009/2010. We owe a debt to both Bruce and his wife Sandra for building strong relationships with European actuaries and growing the Society's role and reputation within the European profession in the process. We were all delighted, and proud, when, in 2013, the AAE appointed Bruce as Honorary Chairperson in recognition of his outstanding service over many years. Even as he battled his serious illness, Bruce's interest in the profession never waned and he continued to contribute his thoughts and ideas to both the Society and the AAE.

Bruce will be remembered, not just for what he did, but for how he did it. At his memorial service, his son Ian recalled the principles that Bruce taught to his children: *Work hard. Be polite and courteous. Be kind to others. Do your best.* Bruce certainly led by example. Hugely capable, he was also humble and unassuming, and always respectful towards others. He was also very generous,

and extended many kindnesses quietly and without seeking thanks or credit. A colleague at the AAE recalled his smiling, smart, expressive face and wished that he could still listen to him and learn from him – emotions shared by many, no doubt.

Bruce's generosity and talents were felt beyond the actuarial profession too.

He was an active member of his parish from a young age. He devoted much time and expertise to the Boy's Brigade and later the Steadfast Association. He was a key player in a project to build a parish centre and it stands now as a physical embodiment of his efforts. Within the wider Church of Ireland, he chaired the Clergy Pension Trust and made a significant contribution to The Commentary on the Constitution of the Church of Ireland, launched this year.

First and foremost, though, Bruce was a family man. He and Sandra loved each other dearly and supported one another through thick and thin. He always found the time to help his children with their studies and to support and encourage them in their sporting and musical activities. He helped them with life, always willing to sit, listen and chat through the most complex of problems and the most mundane of complaints. He was thrilled to welcome two grandchildren into his life in the last few years, two more people to love and care for.

Bruce was diagnosed with cancer in 2012. He fought his illness with courage, determination, dignity and incredible positivity. In 2014, he started regular trips to New York to take part in a trial of an experimental medication. Speaking about the experience in a 2015 Washington Post article, he said: "I'm lucky in the sense I'm living in these times rather than five years ago or even three years ago. I can only be thankful for it."

Earlier this year, Bruce put himself forward for ground-breaking treatment in North America. He knew what the consequences of failure would be, but he hoped to beat the cancer once and for all, or if not, to at least contribute to medical improvements that would ultimately help others. He was truly a role model and an inspiration to the end.

We send our sincere condolences to Bruce's family and many friends. May memories of the happy times they spent together comfort them and help them to cope with their great loss.

Yvonne Lynch, CEO

Seminar on Regulation of Private Health Insurance in Ireland



From left to right: Richard van Kleef, Cathy Herbert, Thomas McGuire, John Armstrong, James O'Donoghue, Fiona Kiernan, Eoin Dornan, Brendan McCarthy.

On September 26th, 2018, the Society hosted a well-attended seminar on the future regulation of the private health insurance market in Ireland focused on potential changes to the regulation of private health insurance to adapt to a changing market environment. Private health insurance continues to be an important part of the wider health system with over 44% of the population currently insured.

The seminar provided input into the work of the Risk Equalisation Review Group of the Department of Health as it considers changes to the system.

The Society was fortunate to have a panel of eminent speakers from both Ireland and

abroad to discuss how the risk equalisation system could evolve in line with best international practice. The speakers have all recently worked together on a new book titled *"Risk adjustment, Risk Sharing and Premium Regulation in Health Insurance Markets: Theory and Practice"* published by Academic Press.

Each of the speakers spoke in a personal capacity.

John Armstrong, a member of the Society and also a researcher at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam was the first speaker and set out the context for regulation of the Irish health insurance market. He talked through the history of regulation of health insurance in

Ireland and provided a background on some of the key tools that are used in regulated health insurance markets that seek to meet a social solidarity objective while facilitating competition between insurers.

One of the key tools is risk equalisation. John outlined that there is currently an important discussion taking place, in Ireland, about modifying the risk equalisation mechanism to better allow for differences in the health status of individuals.

Using his experience in other countries, John outlined a roadmap on how a health status approach could be introduced in Ireland.

John advocated strengthening our risk

Seminar on Regulation of Private Health Insurance in Ireland

equalisation system in line with best international practice to copper-fasten equity in the private health insurance market. He noted that doing so would discourage all insurers from selecting and targeting young and healthy rather than relatively older and sicker groups in society. It would also, he maintained, support the reform proposals in Sláintecare which was heavily focused on bringing greater equity to the health system. John added that a key next step in improving risk equalisation would be to collect morbidity data from private hospitals. Such data is currently not collected. Noting that this will be challenging, given the complexities and cost in collecting such data, and may lead to controversy he also shared the view that it could be done within a reasonable timescale.

This theme of the importance of moving towards health-status risk equalisation was supported by the two other speakers Prof. Richard van Kleef from the Erasmus School of Health Policy and Management in the Erasmus University in Rotterdam and Prof. Tom McGuire from the Department of Health

Policy, Harvard Medical School, Harvard University.

Prof. van Kleef said that the design of health-based risk equalisation comes with data requirements and trade-offs and that the design of health-based risk equalisation is (and might always be) work in progress. He added that health-based risk equalisation compensates insurers for systematic differences in spending between people in good health and those in poor health. He noted that three decades of research have led to sophisticated health indicators being deployed in many countries based on diagnoses, utilisation and spending.

As an alternative, or complement to risk equalisation Prof. McGuire provided evidence on the incentives that might arise from the use of a risk sharing mechanism under which actual costs are shared between insurers rather than expected costs.

Prof. McGuire noted that risk sharing is a tool a regulator can use to complement health status based risk equalisation. Under

such arrangements, risk can be shared with consumers, providers, other plans and even regulators. It is a common feature of health plan payment systems (including in Ireland) and is a useful mechanism given that a very few members of a health insurance market account for a large share of cost and risk. Risk sharing, such as reinsurance, is very effective at improving the match between credits (i.e. plan payments to costs) for this group.

His overall conclusion was that "risk sharing and morbidity based risk equalisation policies should be chosen together taking advantage of the strengths of each."

Following the presentations there was a panel discussion on future regulation of the market, chaired by Cathy Herbert. The panel included representatives from the Department of Health, the private hospital sector and a clinician who has significant experience in the regulation of health insurance. There was considerable engagement from the audience and a lively discussion of the issues raised.

SOME KEY TERMS USED IN RELATION TO THE REGULATION TO PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE IN IRELAND

Community rating is the long-established requirement in the Irish health insurance market that all consumers should be charged the same premium for a product regardless of their risk profile. Thus, an 80 year old must be charged the same premium as a 35 year old for the same product. This contrasts with practice in, for example, the motor insurance market where younger drivers can be charged a different premium compared to older drivers.

Risk equalisation is a tool that is used to provide for cross-subsidies between consumers in the market depending upon their risk characteristics. Many different countries have forms of risk equalisation in place as part of their health insurance markets including Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Ireland in Europe; Australia, Chile, Colombia, Israel and the United States outside of Europe.

Risk equalisation in Ireland operates under a system of credits administered by the Health Insurance Authority. At present, credits (i.e. cross subsidies) are in place based upon the following risk characteristics: age, gender and type of cover. The credits are funded by a risk equalisation levy paid by insurers for each insured person.

Risk sharing is a tool for sharing the actual claims costs of insurers. It, therefore, should be considered as an alternative to risk equalisation, which is based upon predicting expected claims costs. In Ireland, an element of the transfers between insurers is based on risk sharing mechanism as insurers are compensated based upon the hospital utilisation experience of their members.

Morbidity data highlights the presence of disease or other adverse health event, including illness, injury or disability in individuals.

President's Conference



L-R: Ciaran Belton and Fearghus O'Rourke



L-R: Ciaran Long, Vincent Sheridan and John O'Dwyer



L-R: Darren Houihane (Dept. of Health), Jim Daly T.D. and Ross Mitchell



L-R: Dervla Tomlin and Ann Kelleher



L-R: Jennifer Johnston, Ann O'Keeffe and Anna Drought



L-R: Jonathan Goold, James Grennan, David Duffy and Colm Fagan



L-R: Niamh Walsh, Darragh McHugh, Brian Mulcair and Mark Jordan



L-R: Oisín Kennedy and Paraic Shorthall

Risk Management Perspectives Conference



From left to right: Allan Kearns, Sean Casey, Jean Rea, James Maher, Jenny Minogue, Brian Binchy, Maurice Whyms, Jim Power, Brenda Dunne

With a broad mix of Risk Management topics on the agenda, the Society's recent Risk Management Perspectives Conference had something for everyone, from Brexit to risk culture and data analytics. In this article, we summarise the key themes.

A summary of the highlights...

An engaging introduction from Maurice Whyms, the Society President, set the tone for the full day conference in the Convention Centre highlighting some upward trends in Google search terms including disruption, far right and cyber risk. What followed for the day was a well-balanced agenda of Risk Management topics, ranging from Brexit and Geopolitical risks, to the technical world of Operational risk modelling and looking to the future, and how to keep pace with data analytics.

Senator Neale Richmond was up first with a very insightful, even if a bit concerning, update on the Brexit situation – including the key players, the key terms and the process to the end of March 2019. A lot of risks and a long road still ahead would seem to sum up the position and it was clear that this remains very much a moving target both politically and from a financial services industry perspective. From a Risk perspective it is clear we must continue to watch this space.

Before the coffee break it was the turn of Jean Rea from KPMG who gave an excellent talk on data analytics with a risk focus. It is clear that the risk landscape is changing with

emerging technologies now higher up our CEOs' agendas and data now our greatest commodity. Data scientists are more in demand than ever and insurance companies are not just competing with each other but with all other industries for the top talent. Jean referenced a recent Central Bank of Ireland talk on the regulatory expectation in the digital work and it's clear that data is, understandably, high on the regulatory agenda.

She highlighted many benefits to getting on board the data train, with new software, tools and techniques available to gain significant efficiencies in data preparation, analysis, visualization and reporting. So what is holding us back? It would seem legacy systems, inertia and fear of the unknown. Data is a key asset for firms and while data analytics are all well and good, legacy systems issues common to many insurance companies make this easier said than done – firms that work to get a single source of their most important data are most likely to survive and thrive. The key

challenge here is to get the buy-in for the initial investment to get your data where it needs to be before the analytics can start.

Many companies don't necessarily see the benefits or have the skills to engage in these new technologies. Data scientists are not insurance specialists and have different skills to actuaries – the best model can be to mix data scientists with our existing pricing and actuarial team and cross-pollinate. Jean encouraged the participants to embrace these changes to our industry and profession and to help lead the way she dispelled two myths – actually this isn't that new and it isn't that hard. We need to embrace these techniques or risk the chance of being left behind.

In the afternoon session, Patrick Meghen spoke about his work as part of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries' working party (IFoA) on Cyber Operational Risk Scenarios. This was a fascinating topic for general discussion, with threats from extreme groups, "script kiddies", or serious organized crime but also a key challenge for operational risk professionals in trying to get to grips with their firms' actual exposure. In the IFoA's working party actuaries, cyber experts and academics combined to try to tackle this challenge of how to define and quantify cyber operational risk scenarios. The result is a very useful framework to help to guide you through the process, from definition & taxonomy, to the scenarios themselves to the quantification and the validation.

Impassioned discussions on risk culture, geopolitical and macroeconomic risks and consumer protection along with closer to home sessions on ORSAs and regulatory reporting filled the rest of the really excellent agenda that continues to go from strength to strength each year.

Each of the speakers spoke in a personal capacity.

Want to know more? Check out the Society of Actuaries website for the slides and podcasts from the Risk Management Perspectives Conference 2018 [here](#).

Danielle O'Sullivan



Launch of Data Analytics Library



The Society has recently launched a Data Analytics Library, an online resource for those interested in learning more about data science, analytics and applications in the actuarial and financial spheres.

Purpose of the Data Analytics Library

Sometimes called the "original data scientists", actuaries are well placed to add a lot of value as data scientists due to our strong quantitative background coupled with business insight. The purpose of the Data Analytics Library is to provide practical tools and resources for actuaries wishing to develop their data analytics skills - either as part of their current actuarial work or by moving into a data science role.

In this fast-developing field, it is impossible to provide a comprehensive repository. Instead, the Library aims to include the most common

data analytics and machine learning tools as a foundation. After that, navigating the broader discussion around applications of data science may only be constrained by your ability with google searches! However, the Library is intended to be a live resource and will be maintained on an ongoing basis.

Contents of the library

Some key sections of the library include:

- Society support, events and training - description of the support provided by the Society including special membership for wider fields members, links to related past events and training sessions;
- Materials - reference materials (articles and books), tutorials, tools and other resources for members interested in the details;
- Step by step guide - seven steps to get started in data analytics in a few months;

- Courses and skills - list of university and other online courses and required skillset for those keen on becoming a data scientist.

Highlights

- Growing list of events hosted by the Society concerning data science applications;
- Links to free online courses;
 - For example, did you know that there is a free Stanford University course on statistical learning (a view of machine learning from a statistical background) supported by two free online text books? Learn directly from world leaders such as Trevor Hastie and Rob Tibshirani (the developer of the widely used Lasso algorithm, the favourite machine learning technique of many thought leaders in the field);
 - Or you can do a 5-course Deep Learning Specialisation on Coursera, presented by a world leader (Andrew Ng) on the topic;
 - And many more.
- Dip your toes into the language wars. R or Python? Which side will you fall on? (Of course the true answer is both are great).

The library is available at <https://web.actuaries.ie/press-publications/data-analytics-library>.

Irish Deliver Insight at Data Science Conference

7

Irish speakers
of 20 total

2:1

Attendees from Insurers
General:Life

1943

Year neural networks
model created

Attendees at the IFoA's recent conference on data science at Staple Inn were left with many burning questions and one clear conclusion borne out in the data - that Ireland and Irish actuaries in particular are to the fore amongst developments in the world of data science. In the plenary session, actuary Declan Whiteford and data scientist Brendan Doherty relayed Pramerica's success in teaming actuaries up with data scientists in accelerating their underwriting processes through the use of predictive analytics. Promising results in proof-of-concept applications in life insurance using data captured from wearable technology devices may lead to future deployment.

There followed a break-out session in which Michael Crawford of Agrippa Data Consulting presented insights gained from leveraging census data in developing life insurance retention analytics. Meanwhile, Jean Rea (KPMG Ireland) introduced stochastic

reserving using Markov Chain Monte Carlo models through the programming language R. Successful industry partnerships with university research in the field of data science were highlighted by Declan McKibben of ADAPT Research Centre.

Chair Niall Fennelly of FTI Consulting introduced Ian Carey and Rebecca Pope (both of KPMG UK) who highlighted KPMG's lessons learned from data science advances in the field of healthcare and potential transfer to insurance. Real world case studies included improvements in stroke patient outcomes achieved by providing paramedics with real-time data on traffic and A&E capacity. Other presentations and case studies covered toolkits, data science techniques, and potential business applications for data science in the insurance world. The interaction of three skillsets - IT skills, domain knowledge, and statistics - make an effective data scientist, and actuarial teams with ambitions

in data science should self-assess in these spheres.

The closing discussion heard contributions from a panel of actuaries and data scientists as well as attendees on questions facing actuaries at present:

- What is the role of the actuary in a world where data scientists coexist with actuaries in a multi-disciplinary team?
- Is data science a threat to the actuarial industry?
- How should the IFoA react in the context of these developments?
- Do machine learning and artificial intelligence raise the prospect of role replacement or augmented analytics?

The views offered were diverse with much optimism about opportunities for insurers and actuaries in this advancing field.

James Bredin

James Bredin is an actuary with an interest in data science. Materials from the one-day conference 'The Actuary as a Data Scientist - What, How and Why?' are available on the [IFoA website](#).

Christmas Drinks and the Benefits of Volunteering in the Not-for-Profit Sector



Left to right:
Orla O'Kane,
Ramona Dolan,
Roma Burke,
Maurice Whyms

On the 4th December almost 90 members gathered at the Alex Hotel for the annual Society Christmas drinks which proved an enjoyable and informative evening.

In the past few years, the Christmas drinks have been paired with an evening meeting that has been less about developing technical skills but focused more on other topics that members might like to develop their awareness of – for example diversity in 2016 and personal brand development in 2017.

In 2018 (given the season of giving was just around the corner), it was timely to highlight what a difference giving up some of your time and skills might make to the wider community. We already have a strong volunteer ethic within the Society with many of our membership giving time to the Society itself and to young people through our Maths Tutorials. Anecdotally, we also knew that many of our membership were already active in their communities or with charities but some others might like to know how to get involved or what to expect once you take the plunge.

On the night, the presentations gave plenty of insight into the not-for-profit sector and what value the actuarial community can add to organisations that are so reliant on the donation of peoples' time as well as money to further their cause.

Society president Maurice Whyms started the evening with a photo of lego actuaries which must have puzzled many attendees until he explained that the seed of the idea for this evening meeting originated at two workshops held earlier in 2018 that were focused on promoting the actuarial skillset to a wider

audience. At this workshop, a methodology known as Lego Serious Play was used as a facilitation tool. One theme that arose in the workshop was that actuaries wanted to give back to their communities and society but could sometimes find it difficult to know how best to go about this.

Maurice first introduced Orla O'Kane from Boardmatch Ireland, who discussed the work they engage in to improve governance in the not-for-profit sector by strengthening boards and management committees. She discussed the services Boardmatch provides both to volunteers and companies to help them support charities in improving and strengthening their board composition. Orla was very realistic about the challenges of being on a not-for-profit board (for example the time commitment, the personal responsibility you take on, the increased regulation of the sector) but also gave a good insight into the rewards you are likely to get from the experience (including learning how boards work, exposure to and cross learning from people with different skillsets).

We then got some really insightful and eloquent testimony from two Society members who discussed their personal experiences of working with charities.

Ramona Dolan spoke about her involvement with a group named Diversity Sligo. This is a charity which works with refugees and asylum speakers in direct provision in Sligo. What started as some very practical volunteer work involving tutoring one of the children in the direct provision centre and having a weekly catch up with an adult to help them settle into their new town has evolved into Ramona doing a multitude of tasks for this charity. She

is on their committee, acts as treasurer, chairs the funding subcommittee and helps with multiple other tasks such as governance. As Ramona is currently on a career break she has given a lot of her time and spoke movingly of how she has found the experience. One point she made that summed up her contribution as an actuary very well was that in the charity the intention is always there to do the right thing but she is trying to ensure that the right thing is actually done.

Roma Burke spoke about her experience with the Dublin Simon Community. Roma very honestly acknowledged that her initial primary motivation was to get experience of being a director in order to achieve her chartered directorship qualification! However given what she has achieved since she joined the board of directors in 2015 and the pride she showed in the work of the Dublin Simon Community, it's clear that the altruistic aspect of the volunteering is also high on her agenda. Similar to Ramona, Roma has taken on more responsibility since she initially became involved, chairing the audit and risk committee, amongst other things. She did not sugar-coat the risks that you take on when becoming a director of a charity and was keen to emphasise how important doing your own due diligence is before taking on a role. She noted the generosity of fellow actuaries in giving advice about taking on the role and helping her with that due diligence. Like Ramona, she thought that actuaries offer a unique perspective that can really help a charity board – one of which is our ability to ask what may be perceived as the daft questions!

Both Ramona and Roma highlighted the surprising applicability of actuarial skills in charity work and how enjoyable and rewarding their experiences were. We were lucky to have two very passionate and enjoyable presenters from our own membership.

Following the very engaging discussion, many members stayed on to enjoy some festive finger food and drinks as well as the company. This end of year event was a great way of celebrate a successful 2018 for the Society and to mark the festive season.

Carol Moloney

Maths Tutorials – Making a Contribution

For over the past five years, our volunteers have delivered maths tutorials to the DEIS Schools (schools that are identified by the Department of Education and address the educational needs of these children and young people from disadvantaged communities). So far this academic year, we have been able to provide help to 198 different students across

28 schools around Dublin. With the support of our tutors, we have been able to deliver over 1,400 hours of maths tuition to students who might otherwise not be in a position to avail of extra help. A big thank you to all our volunteers and we look forward to getting some new volunteers in 2019. Members who cannot volunteer their time, can also consider

the opportunity to make a financial contribution to the SAI Maths Tutorials Project. Please see further details on how to do this at <https://web.actuaries.ie/payments/contribute>.

All support for this valuable project is much appreciated – Thank you!

An Interview with Jim Murphy, Rock n' Roll Actuary



Jim Murphy's Band, *Blue Fish Diamond*

Four years ago, Jim Murphy surprised most of us in the actuarial profession by leaving a successful job at a Dublin consultancy to start a new life in the music industry. With Jim's band, Blue Fish Diamond, having just realised its first album *From Dark to Light* (hailed by *Hot Press* magazine as "essential listening for those who like their music powerful and heartfelt") we took the opportunity to catch up with Jim to find out more.

Take us back to the decision to leave a successful actuarial career and focus on building a music career. Honestly Jim, what were you thinking?

It was one of the most difficult decisions I've ever made. I knew I'd be giving up so much that I had worked hard for over the previous 25 years and that's one of the reasons why it took a few years to make the decision, fear and money being the other two! I eventually decided that I didn't want to look back in 10 years' time and wonder "what if?" ...

What was the reaction of people at the time – particularly from other actuaries who would know you through the profession?

Surprise! I think privately some people thought I was mad or going through a mid-life crisis.

You decided to go down the route of studying songwriting at university. Was that to give an anchor and a structure to what you were doing? What's your perspective on the choice to go to college now that you've come out the other end? Going down the college route was a fantastic experience. I started the course in 2014 in a

college called BIMM and I graduated this year with a degree in Commercial Modern Music. I learned a lot about the music industry as well as developing my technical skills but I think the biggest advantage of going to college was getting to meet a wide pool of people whose primary focus is also music. All of the members of my band, Blue Fish Diamond, were in my year in college and occasionally when one or two of them have not been available for a gig, it's been straightforward to find a temporary replacement. Most of the students in college were twenty plus years younger than me but I was very pleasantly surprised to learn that this wasn't a barrier to making music together.

What does your day look like now, given the structure of college classes is finished?

My days are a mix of creative and administrative work. Up until recently, I was spending a lot of time preparing for our debut album release. Now that the album has been shared with the world, I've been cranking up the creative juices again. Between bursts of inspiration, I am regularly updating our Facebook page and our Twitter and Instagram accounts. We will be releasing a video for one of the songs from the album in the new year and managing that process takes some time too.

What have been the highlights since you changed careers? I'm guessing that playing at Electric Picnic must be right up there?

Electric Picnic was an incredible experience. We played on the 2FM stage on the Saturday and we got a great reception. Other highlights were getting radio play for the three singles we released earlier in the year and then

releasing our debut album in October. The *Hot Press* review was a nice moment too!

Does your album *From Dark to Light* sound like you imagined it would? How much control does a songwriter have over how your work sounds?

I'm delighted with how the album sounds. Our producer Gavin Glass brought a lot to the table. We were very well rehearsed when we went into the studio but he added a lot to the arrangements of most songs and he reconceptualised one or two of them. Ultimately we were the client so we could veto any of his suggestions, but we ran with most of them.

I'm interested in touching on the logistics of making a music career work.

For a band like Blue Fish Diamond, what's the balance in terms of focus between touring, writing new material, promoting sales of the album, getting airplay, streaming services like Spotify, merchandise and so on?

Until last year, my focus had been on writing material for the album. We went into the studio at the start of summer 2017 and again at the end of it. The album was then mixed and mastered over the last few months of 2017. Coming into 2018, my focus shifted to putting an infrastructure in place to release and promote our music. This involved researching how to get the music into Spotify and other streaming platforms, building a website and social media presence, developing a database of media contacts, writing press releases and booking gigs. Promoting the band through live performances and pursuing PR continues to be a priority but recently I have started working on new material for the next album.

I think it is fair to say that your single launch saw more past presidents of the Society of Actuaries in Ireland attend a gig in The Workmans, than ever before. What has been the reaction among friends and former colleagues to your new career?

I have received tremendous support from friends and former colleagues. I was apprehensive before our first single launch but the reaction from everyone who came was really positive and that gave us more confidence for subsequent gigs.

What are your ambitions for the future?

A key goal is to increase the profile of Blue Fish Diamond and to grow the fanbase. We are targeting a lot of music festivals for 2019 as well as more regular live performances and PR opportunities. It might be a pipe dream but we would love to play Vicar St. at some point in the future!

Interviewer: Kevin Manning

New Students Seminar



L-R: Maurice Whyms, Sean McCarthy, Jenny Quigley, Caroline Breen, Laura Byrne, Eamon Molloy

The annual Seminar for New Students was held on 15th October at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Golden Lane, organised by the Recent Qualifiers Committee. The aim of this seminar is to welcome new students to the profession and to brief them on the role of the Society of Actuaries in Ireland.

Jenny Quigley, chair of the Recent Qualifiers Committee, chaired the seminar and began the afternoon by welcoming the new students to the Society. She emphasised that the day was an ideal opportunity to ask questions about the Society or the actuarial exams.

The first session was an overview of the road to qualification, provided by Chris Bristow, Head of Education Partnerships and Lifelong Learning for the IFoA and Matthew Tennant, Quality Manager for the IFoA. Chris described

the changes to the exam curriculum that are due to come into effect in 2019, including the introduction of some assessments using technology such as Excel and R. Matthew then spoke about the new Personal and Professional Development (or "PPD") Framework, which replaces Work-Based Skills requirements. Students must now update their PPD record each year to reflect competencies developed over the period – so no more leaving it until the last minute! Chris and Matt also took questions from the understandably very interested audience.

Members of the Recent Qualifiers Committee then provided an overview of the core practice areas of actuaries. Méabh Kennedy presented on life and health insurance, pensions was covered by John Moran and Deirdre O'Brien spoke about general insurance. The speakers each gave a market overview, spoke about the kind of work actuaries can do in each of the practice areas and discussed some current hot topics in their areas.

After the coffee break Cian Breathnach, outgoing chair of the Society's Student Committee, kicked things off with a much appreciated session on how to study for the actuarial exams. He provided some very useful tips for the new students including

how to plan their study timetables, time management in the exam and most importantly no exam post-mortems!

Cian was followed by incoming chair of the Student Committee, Ben Dennesen, who introduced the audience to the SAI Student Society. Ben described the benefits of the Society, in particular its social events and the representation of Irish students at the IFoA's Student Consultative Forum. He also put out a call for volunteers for the new Student Committee for 2018/2019 which got a very positive response.

The seminar was then closed by Maurice Whyms, President of the Society, who officially welcomed the students to the Society and congratulated them on making it to this stage in their career. After providing some food for thought for our new students along with a few entertaining tales from student days, he invited everyone to convene for drinks and finger food following the seminar.

The Recent Qualifiers Committee would like to thank all the speakers who made this seminar a success.

Jenny Quigley

ERM Library Working Party – Update to Library

The SAI ERM library is a collection of over 900 articles, books and papers on a variety of topics relating to all aspects of enterprise risk management. Over the course of the past number of months, the ERM Library working party has been refreshing the Library, in order to ensure that it remains up to date and relevant to members.

The working party identified over 30 areas covering a wide range of topics, including risk culture, cyber risk and risk classification to name but a few, and set about gathering as many articles and papers as possible for each area. The working party was keen to maintain the high level of quality within the Library, so each resource gathered was reviewed in detail by both the person who had found the resource, and then separately by another member of the working party. With the help of a number of student volunteers, approximately 250 articles, papers and presentations have been gathered, which are currently in the process of being added to the Library.

The working party is aiming to carry out further updates to the Library over the coming years, and will continue to promote the Library to both members and non-members who have an interest in ERM.

We would encourage all members with an interest in risk management to take a look at the updated library, which can be found here: <https://web.actuaries.ie/press/erm-library>. We hope that you find it a useful tool, and if there is any feedback on the Library, or if you have any resources you'd like to see added, then please contact the Society.

Darragh McHugh

These are the current trending articles from the database. Log on to the database to read these and other great resources:

1. Conduct Risk framework: Industry trends and challenges
2. The Journey from Model Validation to Model Risk Management
3. Still living with mortality: The longevity risk transfer market after one decade
4. Managing Political Risk - Controlling Loss, Finding Opportunity
5. Corporate Culture and Financial Reporting Risk: Looking Through the Glassdoor

Consultations – a Challenge or a Chore?

Government departments and regulators frequently launch public consultations to which the Society responds. In recent months there have been a number of such consultations of which the most widely publicised was that issued by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) on an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System. The public consultations to which the Society has submitted responses in the past 12 months are set out in the table below.

November 2018	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection	Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings
October 2018	Interdepartmental Pensions Reform and Taxation Group	Supplementary Pensions Reform: Roadmap for Pensions Reform 2018-2023
October 2018	Pensions Authority	Regulation of defined contribution master trusts
September 2018	Central Bank of Ireland	Second Consultation Paper (CP 124) on Amendments to the Non-Life Insurance (Provision of Information) (Renewal of Policy of Insurance) Regulations 2007
September 2018	Central Bank of Ireland	Consultation Paper (CP 122) on Changes to the Domestic Actuarial Regime and Related Governance Requirements under Solvency II
June 2018	Department of Finance	The Feasibility of an Insurance Claim-by-Claim Register
February 2018	Central Bank of Ireland	Consultation Paper (CP 114) on Amendments to the Non-Life Insurance (Provision of Information) (Renewal of Policy of Insurance) Regulations 2007
December 2017	Pensions Authority	Key Function Holders

In addition, the Society is sometimes asked by the Central Bank or the Pensions Authority for input on specific issues which are not the subject of a public consultation.

The Society, as an active member of the International Actuarial Association (IAA) and the Actuarial Association of Europe (AAE), inputs to consultations or surveys conducted by these bodies to help form the responses which they make to international or European bodies such as the IASB and EIOPA. Where relevant, the Society may also respond to consultations by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries e.g. on the "[Qualification Framework](#)".

So how does the Society go about preparing a response to a consultation? In some cases, responsibility may be given to the appropriate Practice Committee, but usually we issue a call for volunteers to set up a working party to develop a draft response for review by the appropriate Committees and, where relevant, by Council. We consider this to be the best approach as it gives opportunities to members to contribute on issues in which they have a particular interest, and reduces the burden on the Practice Committees who each have their own agendas to pursue, although of course it is right that the relevant Committees are given the opportunity to review and challenge the initial draft prepared by the Working Party.

The key to a successful working party is to assemble a group of engaged volunteers (with the capacity to commit time to the exercise over what is typically a four to six week period) and, in particular, a committed and sensitive Chair for the group. We are pleased to say that, without exception, all of the working groups which we have established over the last year have met these key requirements and have delivered, in many cases within a very tight timeframe, well-developed draft responses which have ultimately formed the basis for our submissions.

Where the submission is not purely on technical issues, but includes policy positions, the Society's response (after review by the relevant Practice Committee(s)) must be approved by Council before it is submitted. As might be expected, Council members often make insightful suggestions, or challenge the draft from a perspective which may not have been considered by the working group, and it is desirable to have a number of days after Council has commented to make necessary amendments before submission. This all serves to reduce even further the time available to the working group to develop the draft, and requires tight adherence by them to the workplan and timetable decided at outset.

The Society considers that it is very important

to make substantive submissions to consultations where the actuarial viewpoint can add value, in line with the "Independent Voice" aspect of the Society's Strategy Plan 2017-2020 which states that "We will make a contribution to public debate as an independent voice, and will build our role and influence in contributing to the public policy agenda".

We are pleased at the high quality of the submissions which have been made recently; for example:

- The CBI consultation CP122 on amendments to the Domestic Actuarial Regime (DAR) for (re)insurance undertakings, where a number of the recommendations in the Society's submission were taken on board in the Feedback Statement and the consequential amendments to the DAR.
- The submission to the DEASP consultation on automatic enrolment, which led to coverage in the press and the opportunity for the President to outline the key issues on Newstalk.

If you would like to be involved in developing the Society's response to future consultations, please look out for volunteering opportunities; we are generally able to accept all offers of help and we find that those who volunteer also benefit from the experience.

ESG Event



The Society established a working group to consider the Environmental, Social and Governance (“ESG”) issues for Irish Pension Schemes in June of this year. This was in direct response to the emerging global trend towards more responsible and sustainable investment practices.

Responsible Investment is an approach to investing that aims to incorporate ESG factors into investment decisions, to better manage risk and generate sustainable, long-term returns. Unlike ethical investing which sought to exclude certain industries for ethical or moral grounds and accepted the potential for lower investment returns as a consequence, Responsible Investment is pursued even by the investor whose sole purpose is financial return, because it argues that to ignore ESG factors is to ignore risks and opportunities that have a material effect on the returns delivered to clients and beneficiaries.

Responsible Investment is moving further up the corporate agendas and is likely to remain

a key focus area for all stakeholders over the coming years. For longer term investors, the drive towards responsible investment is triggered by their fiduciary responsibility and the importance of considering risk within the broadest context including those risks like climate change which may only emerge over time within portfolios. Asset owners such as trustees of pensions funds will increasingly need to look at their approach to Responsible Investment and, following the forthcoming transposition of the IORP II directive, they will be required to disclose if, and how, they have considered ESG issues within the investment strategies for the assets of the scheme.

The ESG Working Group organised the first briefing to members on November 5th during Ireland's first ever Climate Week, which brought together the country's biggest companies, financiers, universities, NGOs, entrepreneurs and climate change innovators to debate and discuss the key risks and opportunities emerging from climate change. Eimear Toomey of Sustainalytics, a recognised

leader in this field, provided an introduction to ESG investing trends and practices.

A number of Society members then attended the launch of [“Ireland’s First Responsible Investment State of Play Report”](#) and had the opportunity to meet [Fearless Girl](#), who was visiting Dublin as part of Climate Week

It is intended to hold a series of further events over the course of 2019 to support members in their own roles and advisory capacities to address this topic. The next event will address the ESG requirements introduced under the IORP II Directive for Irish pension schemes and provide an opportunity to hear from leading practitioners who have implemented Responsible Investment practices within their own portfolios.

The ESG Working Party would be delighted to hear from any member who is interested in this topic and would like to join the Working Party. Please contact info@actuaries.ie in the first instance.



Left to right: Alcarine Power, Robert Meaney, Philip Shier, Yvonne Lynch, Sandra Rockett and Martin McAlister



Left to right: Posing with Fearless Girl: Sandra Rockett and Eimear Toomey

Student News

BECOMING AN ACTUARY BROCHURE

The latest version of the 'Becoming an Actuary Brochure' should provide any potential actuarial students with all of the information they will need to begin their career as an actuary.

This brochure is available on our website at <https://web.actuaries.ie/about/so-how-can-i-become-actuary> and covers information on the following:

- About actuaries
- Why become an actuary?
- Where do actuaries work?
- Actuarial Exams
- Actuarial Students
- Society of Actuaries in Ireland

GUIDE FOR STUDENT ACTUARIES

The Guide for Student Actuaries in Ireland is a very useful resource for student actuaries. The guide is available on our website (<https://web.actuaries.ie/students>) and covers information on the following:

- The Society of Actuaries in Ireland
- The Institute & Faculty of Actuaries (IFoA)
- The Actuarial Exams
- Planning your Study
- Personal & Professional Development
- Working as a Student Actuary – useful tips

Thanks to the Recent Qualifiers Committee for updating the brochure and guide to incorporate key updates, including changes to the IFoA Curriculum.

We would highly recommend that you share the brochure and guide with any recent graduates you know.

THE STUDENT SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2018/2019

Committee Chair: Ben Dennessen

Treasurer: Eavan Gleeson

Communications Officer: Niall Mc Groarty

Ordinary Committee Members: Nicole Feery, David Purcell, Stephen Brennan, Michael Crowley, Jane Gormley and Alison Kelly

To keep up to date check out our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/StudentSocietyofActuariesIreland

If you wish to contact any of the committee members, click on the Member Directory for their details or email the Society at info@actuaries.ie

STUDENT SOCIETY EVENTS

The new Committee kicked off their term with a Christmas party in Capitol on November 29th. On arrival, guests were greeted with food and drinks and a great night was had by all. There was a phenomenal turn-out for this event. On behalf of the new committee we would like to say a huge thank you to all who attended and made this night such a success. We hope you all had as good a time as we did. Finally, thank you to Acumen Resources for kindly sponsoring some wonderful raffle prizes.

We hope to organise more events like this in the future. There have been some rumours of: a night at the dogs in February; a quiz in May/June and a ball in October. Be sure to like our Facebook page to keep up to date with all the fun:

www.facebook.com/StudentSocietyofActuariesIreland

Looking forward to seeing you all at future events.

The Student Society Committee



DCU STUDENT PRIZE WINNER 2018

Congratulations to **Ryan Hogan** who was the best graduating student in 2018 in Actuarial Mathematics in DCU. Emily O'Gara (Manager of Professional Affairs) presented Ryan with a medal to acknowledge this wonderful achievement.

SAI Golf Society Events in 2018

I was delighted to be the captain of the SAI Golf Society in 2018. I would like to thank Catherine McBride for all of her help in ensuring the smooth running of both the Matchplay and the Captain's Day outing. There was a seamless transition from Mary Butler to Catherine. The SAI golfers are hoping that Mary will find the time in her retirement to take up golf!

I would like to thank all of those who played in the golf events over the year. The golf events are very sociable and they are a great way to get to know other actuaries in a casual environment.

The Piers Segrave-Daly Matchplay ran over the summer months and there was a closely contested final played between John O'Connell and two times past Matchplay winner, Bryan

O'Connor. Congratulations to John who prevailed on the day. Ray Leonard and Willie Holmes were the other semi-finalists.

The Captain's Day event took place on 30th August at Grange Golf Club. I was delighted to see some actuaries playing who had not played in a number of years and also some actuaries who had not played in the competition before. This year for the first time, the winner of Captain's Day, John O'Connell was also the winner of Matchplay. Congratulations to John for bringing his good run of form over the summer into Captain's Day. Congratulations also to Neil Guinan and Steven Hardy who came second and third on the day.

The annual SAI Golf Society v's the Scottish Actuaries golf outing was held in Carton House

in early October. The Scottish Actuaries had indicated a strong preference to play the golf match in Carton House. The venue for this match alternates between Ireland and Scotland each year and Carton House has been the Irish venue for the last number of years, such is the Scottish Actuaries like of the course. Despite the windy conditions which one may have expected to better suit the Scottish Actuaries, the SAI golfers prevailed on the day and continued the strong tradition of retaining the Quaich trophy.

I would like to thank Ray Leonard for taking over the role of captain of the SAI Golf Society for 2019 and I wish Ray the best of luck with the annual events and hopefully he can retain the Quaich trophy in our international match!

Jane Gleeson SAI 2018 Golf Captain



Left Photo: "SAI vs Scottish Actuaries"
Winning SAI golf team: Ciarán Long, Steven Hardy, Jonathan Gould, Jane Gleeson, John O'Connell, Ray Leonard, Willie Holmes (missing from photo: Thomas Farrell).

Right Photo: John O'Connell winner of the Piers Segrave-Daly Matchplay and Captain's Day competitions

On the Move

Fellows:

June McMahan moved from Athora to **SCOR**
Kleona Menti moved from Deloitte to **Central Bank of Ireland**
Darren Tuohy moved from Mercer to **Aon**
Joe Kelleher moved from Allianz to **XL Catlin**
Rafay Khan moved from Zurich to **PartnerRe**
Sinead O'Sullivan moved from Allianz to **SCOR**
Barry Murphy moved from Milliman to **Canada Life Reinsurance**
James Bredin moved from Athora to **Metlife**
Daniel McCarthy moved from KPMG to **Canada Life International**
Marian Keane moved from PwC to **Presidion**
Christian Scherff moved from Athora to **AWP Health & Life SA**
Stephen O'Brien moved from Irish Life to **Prudential International Assurance**
Aileen Murphy moved from SCOR to **Deloitte**
Duncan Robertson moved from Athora to **Fidelity Life**
Patrick Cosgrave moved from Willis Towers Watson to **New Ireland Assurance**

Jane Cunningham moved from Irish Life to **SCOR**
Sarah Keane moved from Milliman to **SCOR**
Dasha Douglas moved from SCOR to **Lombard International Assurance**
Rachel Kelly moved from Capita to **Canada Life Reinsurance**

Students:

Nabeelah Nawoor moved from Generali to **CACI**
Marie-Claire McKenna moved from Willis Towers Watson to **CNP Santander Insurance**
Sinead McLaughlin moved from Capita to **Metlife**
Ciara Browne moved from Willis Towers Watson to **Mazars**
Brian Smith moved from Milliman to **Standard Life**
Matthew Ahern moved to **Partner Re**
Cillian Forde moved from CACI to **UnipolRe**
Joseph Sloan moved from MetLife to **Milliman**
Ciara O'Brien moved from Hannover Re to **PwC**

Best Wishes

Congratulations and best wishes to our Office Manager, Catherine McBride as she heads on maternity leave in December. We look forward to hearing how Catherine is doing and who knows, we might even get to see a picture or two on New Year's Day, on the TV! Also, a very warm welcome to Sheila Normanly, who joins the Society to take up the role of Administrator during Catherine's maternity leave.



Society of
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