

## Our annual review 2023 / 2024



The 30th June marked the end of our eleventh year in business. John left PwC at their year-end on 30th June 2013 and we have always continued to measure our years from then, in case you wondered about the choice of June. If you cast our minds back, our eleventh year opened with our tenth anniversary celebration. If you need a reminder, you can find a gallery of photographs [here](#).

We have had another busy year. So, what have we been up to over the last twelve months?

### Clients

The majority of John's work is consulting on the structure and operation of real estate funds. Fund structuring advice continued to be a key area of focus over the last year, with a mixture of work on new funds and restructuring of existing funds. As in previous years, open-ended, semi open-ended and evergreen funds have been a major aspect of our activity, with a lot of interest in John's work on fund pricing and liquidity.

We were particularly pleased with our work for our client Northern Horizon on the conversion of the Northern Horizon Aged Care Social Infrastructure SCSp SICAV-RAIF from a closed-ended to an evergreen fund. We were delighted to assist with this complex project. We remain very convinced of the case for open-ended and semi open-ended funds, and John is currently working on a couple of others.

The introduction of new types of UK real estate fund vehicles, particularly the long-term asset fund (LTAF) is also prompting work. There are some comments on John's public policy involvement later in this review.

John has also been providing advice on operational aspects of running real estate investment management businesses, including reviews of controls environment for fund managers and investors. This is becoming an increasingly important area.

In addition to the consulting work, John has two non-executive roles. He continues his role as independent chair of SURE Capital Partners, the investment adviser of the Urban Splash Residential Fund and as non-executive director for Patrizia Hanover real estate fund.

## Real estate industry bodies

John continues to have roles with real estate industry bodies, in particular as a member of the Public Policy Committee of the Association of Real Estate Funds (AREF) and of the Indirect Property Funds Group of the Investment Property Forum (IPF). He has also organised the UK capital markets programme for the year for the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and has been an active contributor to the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) Construction & Real Estate Community.

### *Public policy*

Public policy remains an important focus, with John drafting responses to consultations for AREF and the IPF, as well as drafting our own responses on some key areas. As in previous years, our focus has been on three key areas:

- The transition in the UK from defined benefit to defined contribution pension provision;
- Changes to the UK Solvency rules for life insurers, particularly in respect of the Matching Adjustment rules;
- Liquidity rules for open-ended funds investing in illiquid assets. This has been on the radar of the global regulators of regulators, the Financial Stability Board (FSB) and the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO). John has played a key role in the real estate industry response.

These topics have also been key in our involvement in conferences and seminars, discussed later in this review.



We have also taken an active role in supporting the introduction of new UK real estate investment vehicles - the Long-Term Asset Fund (LTAF), the Reserved Investor Fund (RIF), the private real estate investment trust (REIT) and the Qualifying Asset Holding Company (QAHC). One particular involvement was that John was part of the industry group consulted by HM Treasury and HM Revenue & Customs on changes to the critical Genuine Diversity of Ownership (GDO) rule.

The new government has already committed to a major pension review in its first hundred days, so we expect to continue to contribute to policy discussions on this over the coming months and years. We will provide updates in our regular newsletter (details later in this review) and will also be addressing this in seminars, with an AREF one to be scheduled early in the Autumn.

### Recognition

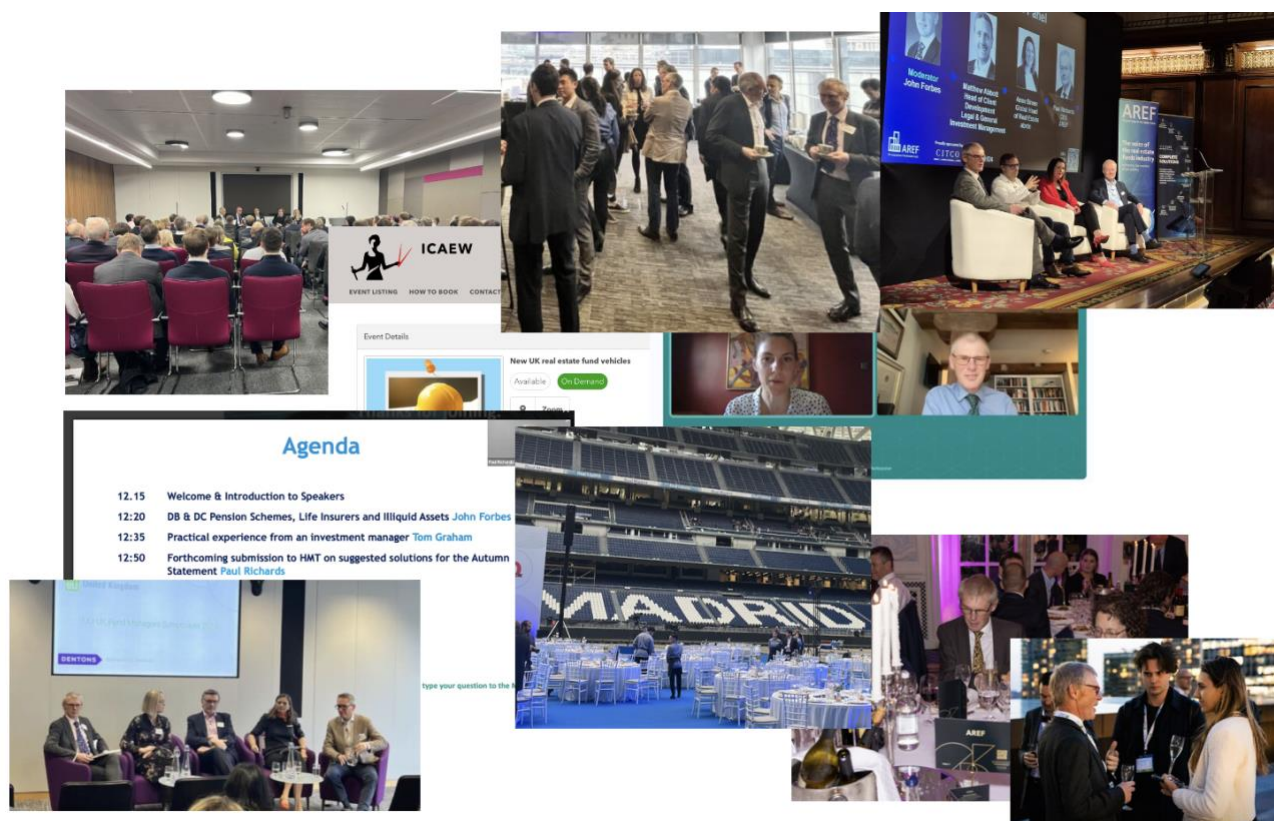


In recognition of his contribution on public policy matters, John was (again) shortlisted for the AREF award for Outstanding Individual Contribution for 2023. Melville Rodrigues bagged the prize for his excellent work on the Reserved Investor Fund.

## Conferences, seminars, webinars and events

As in previous years, John has been a regular speaker, moderator or merely an attendee at many conferences, seminars, webinars and other events.

The topic of the changing UK institutional investor universe has been a recurring theme throughout the year, with John covering this topic at in-person and virtual events for AREF, the ICAEW, the IPF and the ULI over the year. This is not an issue that will be resolved swiftly and is very complex so there will be a lot more on this at events over the next year, particular as the new investment vehicles designed to facilitate the transition start to become a reality.



Although John has been addressing this primarily from a UK perspective, some of the same challenges arise in the EU too, and John is also doing work on new EU vehicles such as the European Long-Term Investment Fund (ELTIF).

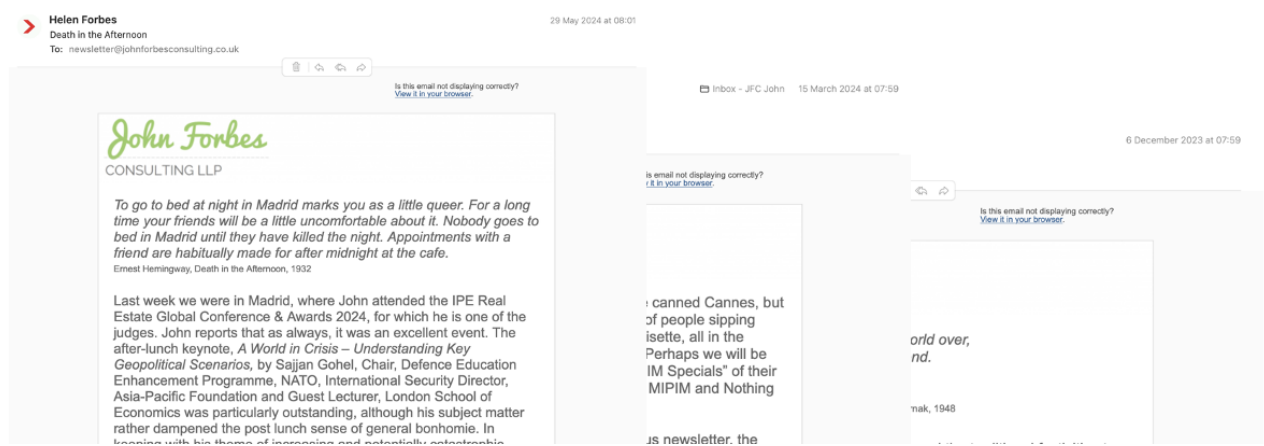
You can find details of events at which John has spoken and supporting materials on our website [here](#).

John is easily bribed with offers of fine food and wine if you are looking for an after-dinner speaker on the exciting topic of real estate fund regulation.

John was again a judge for the annual IPE global real estate awards, which took place on the pitch at the Bernabéu stadium in Madrid with the European Cup present. You can find details of all the winners [here](#). We are big fans of both the IPE global real estate conference in May and the PwC European Real Estate Conference in November as Helen makes a bit of a trip of it too and we do a bit of guerrilla marketing with our clients and contacts at each.

## Our newsletter

Our roughly monthly newsletter now has a distribution list of 1,500 and remains popular, although we acknowledge that many of our readers seem to be more interested in the slightly immature historical trivia than the very worthy content on real estate fund regulation.



A particular achievement this year was garnering a formal complaint to our April newsletter. Our suggestion that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ would take place in 2026 in Ibiza offended somebody, who reported us for both “spam” and “abuse”, presumably dithering over which to choose on discovering that “heresy” is not, in fact, available as an option on the Mailchimp drop down complaints menu.

We are not planning to change our approach so readers may continue to be offended, but not we think those with a sense of humour....



If you are not currently on our newsletter mailing list, and you want to rectify this, you can sign up [here](#).



## Cycling

Cycling has become hugely popular in the real estate industry. It has the compelling attraction of competitiveness and an almost limitless range of blingy toys to buy.

John continues to organise forays into the North Downs for our regular monthly "property cycle" rides for our clients and other contacts in the real estate industry. Everyone in Club Peloton is also invited. These rides leave from Tower Bridge at 9am, pick up from Crystal Palace at about 9.45am and head out for about 50 lumpy miles, returning to Crystal Palace for lunch for those who have time. It is all very informal and you can just turn up if you are free. This does make the turnout highly weather-dependent.....

You can also find details on the Club Peloton website [here](#).

We also join in other Club Peloton real estate industry rides.

One of our  
North  
Downs  
rides.



At a Club Peloton Manchester hub ride.

If you want to join our cycling mailing list, you can sign up [here](#).

Thank you



Thank you to all our clients who have given us work over the year, and, of course, everyone else who has supported us – those who have referred work to us, quoted John in their publications, asked John to speak and invited us to their events.

*John & Helen*

July 2024