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Sir Bryan Carsberg becomes president of the E-Homebuying Forum

In a move that will greatly strengthen its drive for reform, the Former Director General of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and Oftel, Sir Bryan Carsberg, is joining the E-Homebuying Forum (EHF) this week as its first President.

Sir Bryan's Review of Residential Property in 2008 and the Forum's Blueprint for improving the property transaction process both received widespread acceptance across the industry. Sir Bryan's appointment looks set to become the catalyst for turning this consensus into real action, providing a rallying point for those in the industry who want to become engineers of change rather than the victims of it.

In his role as President, Sir Bryan will be overseeing the Forum's aim of bringing greater efficiency, transparency and commitment to the home buying and selling process. He will be working with EHF members – who represent all relevant businesses and stakeholders including estate agents, surveyors, search firms, lenders and solicitors – to achieve consensus on how to bring market-driven improvements to the home buying and selling process. Subsequently, the EHF will liaise with government and industry to effect these improvements.

Sir Bryan said:

“This is a huge opportunity to make a real difference. Notwithstanding the current downturn, it is widely recognised that transaction times in England and Wales compare very poorly to those throughout the rest of Europe, typically taking between 8-10 weeks from acceptance and exchange. Even worse, approximately 1 in 4 transactions fall through.

“But if all businesses involved were to take some responsibility to provide better information to customers about the process, whilst at the same time working towards a truly modernised system,

this would benefit everyone. This year promises to be a crucial one for the property marketplace and I welcome the opportunity to be at the heart of it in my new role as President of the E-Homebuying Forum. Now is the time for industry to look to take a lead and the E-Homebuying Forum is well placed to do this by bringing together businesses and representative bodies across the residential sector.

“The opportunity to reform the homebuying and selling process has never been greater and I am genuinely enthusiastic about what can be achieved.”

Mark Riddick, Chairman of the E-Homebuying Forum states:

“Forum members are delighted that Sir Bryan is to become our president with the wealth of knowledge and experience he brings. Whilst great progress has been made since the Forum was set-up, Sir Bryan’s appointment will provide further impetus to our Blueprint for improving the home buying and selling process, particularly in reaching out to government and industry to act. Sir Bryan’s appointment is a rallying call to all those in industry frustrated by the failure hitherto to improve the process and those that believe that we should now seize the opportunity to be engineers of change rather than victims of it (e.g. HIPs). The forum, under Sir Bryan’s leadership, provides a real opportunity for the industry to shape its own destiny in the current political climate.”

The EHF was set up in 2008 to represent all elements of the home buying process in order to provide a unique and well informed perspective of the current state of the marketplace and to provide solutions as to how this process could best be improved.

Notes for Editors:

- The E-Homebuying Forum provides market-driven leadership on reforms to improve the home buying and selling process.
- Sir Bryan Carsberg was the first Director General of Oftel, holding this position from 1984 to 1992 when he became the Director General of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), a post he held until 1995.

Sir Bryan is also currently President of Locus, the trade association for users of public sector information, is Chairman of the Council of Loughborough University and a non-executive director of RM plc, Novae Group PLC, Inmarsat plc and a member of British Telecom's Equivalence of Access Board. He was an independent, non-executive director of Cable and Wireless Communications plc from 1997 to 2000 and non-executive Chairman of MLL Telecom Ltd from 1999 to 2002.

Sir Bryan has previously held professorships in Accounting at the University of Manchester and the London School of Economics, is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and an Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries. He was knighted in January 1989.

- Mark Riddick is current Chair of The E-Homebuying Forum but will be standing down by Autumn 2010.
- An updated version of the E-Homebuying Forum's Blueprint for improving the property transaction process is being published alongside the announcement of Sir Bryan Carsberg as President. The Blueprint can be viewed at www.e-homebuyingforum.com.
- The E-Homebuying Forum has signed memoranda of understanding with the Council of Property Search Organisations (CoPSO), the Council of Licensed Conveyancers (CLC), the Legal Software Suppliers Association (LSSA) and PISCES, and is in regular dialogue with the Law Society, Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML), the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), the Building Societies Association, the National Association of Estate Agents and Which?.
- The full membership can be viewed on the E-Homebuying Forum's website <http://www.e-homebuyingforum.com/members.html>
- For further information on the E-Homebuying Forum please contact Harriet Crosthwaite, Richard Maughan or Surinder Gill on 0207 618 9100 or firstname.lastname@luther.co.uk
- Further information can also be found at the E-Homebuying Forum's website: www.e-homebuyingforum.com.