

A fond farewell and thank you to Sandy Hunter



Sandy has been a part of the Annington team since 1996

As an ex-military pilot, Sandy Hunter might not have seemed the most obvious candidate to become Deputy Chairman of a property company, but his wider business interests meant that he brought the ideal blend of skills to the job. He had also served as Chairman of one of the country's largest Housing Association groups, gaining first-hand experience of the complexities of large property portfolios

This mix of experience has proved invaluable ever since he joined the business in 1996 and will be much missed when he leaves this year. Sandy was part of the original Annington bid team led by Guy Hands to acquire the MoD's housing stock in England and Wales.

"I had served in the Armed Forces for over 30 years," says Sandy, "and had lived, with a greater or lesser degree of satisfaction on the part of my wife, in many of the houses in question. I had a real interest in the problems involved in Service life and had a great sympathy for Service families."

Sandy is full of praise for the leadership shown by the management team in Annington's early years.

"James Hopkins arrived on the scene in 1998 and immediately transformed the business," he says. "He quickly welded together an innovative and energetic executive team which broke new ground, especially in the preparation and presentation of surplus MoD housing for sale. At the same time, the bread and butter work of the MoD Rent Review was systematised and refined. Under

his leadership, the staff supporting all these activities was small in number but loyal, enthusiastic and extremely well motivated. For me as a Non-Executive Director, it has been a constant delight to play a small part in the success of the company and to enjoy its ethos."

As part of the management team, Sandy has also worked hard to reach out to the Service families living in the houses now owned by Annington (although contractually there can be no direct involvement in the management and maintenance of the estate). A key success has been the Annington Trust, which was set up in 1996 to support community activities. It is still going strong today and has donated over £300,000 to various family groups.

"Now time and the demands of good governance have caught up with me and I must take my leave of the company," says Sandy. "It will be a wrench for me to leave Annington and I can honestly say that I have never in either my military or business careers had the good fortune to serve in such a happy, efficient or well-led team as this remarkable company. I leave it with regret and with my very best wishes for its future success."



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