



Exposed

March 2016

Issue
18



Product Corner

Where did 2015 go?

A reason for referral on our system is an insurer postcode table that requires an increased Flood or Subsidence excess reflecting the increased risk of that particular area, our online system isn't currently able to display these excesses suitably. Our online system has been updated to enable the display of these varying excesses in an immediate quotation, complete with immediate documentation.

ABACUS take pride in being able to provide an immediate quotation for the widest variety of risk profiles, this new development will ensure you are able to provide an immediate, competitive quotation at the initial point of contact with your client.

2016 promises to be a very exciting year in terms of development while ensuring our products remain at the cutting edge in terms of rating and cover. As always, watch this space for new developments.

Happy new year to you all!

Introduction



"The first couple of months of the New Year have flown by. The team at ABACUS have been busy trying to make it easier for you and your staff to do business with us."

We think carefully before making any changes to our ABACUS website and try to keep it as simple as possible. The changes we have recently made to our quote display page allow us to provide instant quotations with terms on a significant number of risks which reduces the number of referrals sent to our new business team. This means that both they and our underwriting team can use their knowledge and experience on the risks that deserve their attention most.

In addition, we are improving the way we handle manual business in an effort to push down those referral times to make sure you have the best chance of converting those valuable enquiries into even more valuable customers.

Our product development team has expanded yet again and are continuing to find ways to improve our competitiveness and acceptance criteria for our products.

All of this is part of our key strategic objective to become your favourite market for let property and vacant risks. We are always open to ideas so if there is anything else you think we could do or improve, then let us know.

Thanks to Tony of Ashburnham's for his contribution to this edition and also for his help in assessing our new system developments. Finally, thank you all for your continued support.

Nick Blunden
Director



ABACUS Caption Competition

We have some great prizes up for grabs in our ever-popular Caption Competition. The prizes for the top three entries are:

1st £50 Voucher
of your choice

2nd £25 iTunes Voucher

3rd £10 Next Voucher

To be in with a chance, simply send your caption entry for the photograph above to

robing@sabacus.co.uk by Friday 11th March 2016.



Can you come up with a winning caption for this image?

Good Luck Everyone!



ABACUS Out & About

What a busy few months to end the year! We have been all over the country in the past few months seeing many of you on the way!

Richard Harrison was the MC as we hosted our Quiz Night in October. Plenty of brain power was required, and amongst others I was on hand to ensure the drink was flowing on the evening. The venue was stunning, and it all made for a smashing night.

Richard Burgess flew all the way up to Scotland for the BIBA Scotland exhibition, based just off the M8 in between Glasgow and Edinburgh. It was good to see so many of you here at this event.

We were also back at the superb Ricoh Arena in November for the Broker EXPO. This is always an excellent day, and we hope you found the event both entertaining and useful. A drink or two was in order after the event, and we found ourselves at the Almanack in Kenilworth for a bite to eat and a few well earned beverages.

Happy New Year to you, and enjoy the edition of Exposed.

Robin

ABACUS Unoccupied Residential Property Owners Update

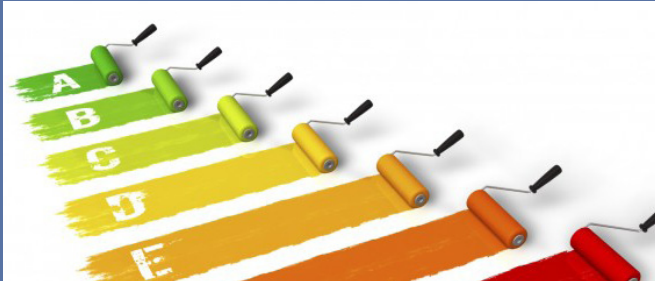
ABACUS are pleased to announce that Pro Rata Refunds* are now in place for 6 and 12 month Unoccupied Residential Property Owners Policies.

Please note that 3 month policies terms and cancellation conditions remain unchanged.

If you have any queries, please contact our Sales & Marketing department on 01702 606 312.

News round up

This edition we are looking back at some of the changes to legislation that affect landlords now, in 2016, and onwards ...



Landlords and MEES time

New MEES (minimum energy efficiency standards) affect landlords in England and Wales from 1st April 2016. The new legislation is being implemented to complement the Government's strategy on improving the energy efficiency of buildings.

This law affects both commercial and domestic landlords.

From April 2016 and in domestic properties, private tenants can request consent for energy efficiency measures in the property. Landlords cannot unreasonably refuse these requests if Green Deal Finance or other similar subsidies are available to meet the costs.

From April 2018, landlords will need to make sure their residential and commercial properties have a minimum 'E' EPC rating prior to letting to new or existing tenants. Failure to comply to this law means that it will be illegal for landlords to let their property.



News electrical safety laws in Scotland came in to force

From 1st December 2015, private landlords in Scotland became responsible for ensuring that an electrical safety inspection of their property is carried out at least once every five years - and by a registered electrician.

Under sections 13(4A) and 19B(4) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Scottish residential landlords are now legally required to ensure that their properties are electrically safe. This includes all electrical fixtures and fittings, any installations relating to the supply of electricity, and any appliances provided by the landlord under the tenancy.

Good News

On Monday, 8th of February ABACUS are making a change to the Quote Display Page online that will result in fewer referrals and more immediate quotations to present to your clients.

Why?

Insurers are adding more and more information to their postcode tables, including higher excesses for some perils based upon the increased risk in those areas. The change to the ABACUS website will allow us to display these terms to you and your clients immediately as opposed to referring them online and our New Business Team providing the quote manually.

How?

A quotation with "terms" (being excess or cover restriction away from our standard) now displays with a clear message advising terms apply. The terms can be viewed by clicking on the message itself, clicking on the "Excesses" button or clicking on the "More Info" button.



The quotation will then expand to detail the excesses for the cover with the non-standard peril being highlighted, in the case below with a £1,000 flood excess:

Property	Subsidence	Flood	Escape of Water	Malicious Damage	Art Theft
1 Westington Enterprise - 10000000	£1,000	£1,000	£250	£100	£100

Effect?

- Fewer referrals
- More immediate quotations
- Clear quotation and documentation
- Quicker quote to client = Better chance to place on cover
- More business for you!

If you have any questions regarding this or any other aspect of ABACUS, please feel free to contact our Sales & Marketing Team on 0845 293 0475 or email agency@sabacus.co.uk



One of the questions you may get asked as a broker is:

What Landlord Insurance Do I Need For A Flat?

The following article can be shared with your customers to help them understand what is needed in order to protect their investment ...

If you are a buy to let property owner, you might be thinking about the type of insurance you need – both to protect the physical structure of your investment and the smooth running of the business itself.

Particular forms of landlord insurance are available if your buy to let property is a flat – or even a whole block of flats. The cover you choose needs to reflect the many different types of flat that exist, together with the variations in forms of ownership.

Given the potentially wide set of variables in arranging landlord insurance for a flat, therefore, you might want to consult a specialist in the provision of such cover – such as ourselves.

Types of flat

With respect to the flat itself, there are a number of possible arrangements, all of which are likely to fall under the broad heading of a flat:

- purpose built – just as the description says, this is a flat built specifically as a self-contained dwelling, in a block of other such flats;
- maisonette – this is effectively a flat which covers two floors, an upper and lower level connected by an internal staircase;

- studio flat – a studio flat on the other hand is typically just a single room, perhaps with a separate kitchen and of course a separate bathroom;
- mews house – this type of flat may be found most often in or near city centres and the buildings were once stables, which have now been converted, typically with a garage at ground level and a self-contained flat above;
- converted flat – the subdivision of larger properties may be done in order to create a number of flats within the same building;
- tenement – the name is more or less restricted in use to certain cities in Scotland and describes a block of flats, generally built before the 1920s, of between 3 and 5 storeys with 2 or 4 flats on each floor.

Types of ownership and tenure

Not only does your landlord insurance need to reflect the type of flat you are going to let, but also the status of your ownership or tenure of the property. There are a number of possibilities. Some of the key distinctions are described in detail by the Home Owners Alliance but fall broadly into the following categories:

Leasehold

- conventionally, this has been the most common form of ownership when it comes to flats;
- ownership of a leasehold flat is through payment of a lease to the

freehold owner (effectively the landlord) of the flat;

- the freeholder is typically responsible for arranging building insurance, but if you are the landlord of the leased property you may nevertheless want to arrange insurance for any contents you own, landlords liability cover and loss or rental income in the event of the flat becoming temporarily uninhabitable;

Freehold

- if you own the freehold, you own not only the building, but also the land upon which it stands;
- in the case of the typical flat – where there is another dwelling either above or below – it might be difficult to acquire sole freehold;
- if you own the flat freehold, however, you may want to consider the importance of buildings as well as contents cover, as suggested by the Money Advice Service;

Shared freehold

- one of the ways in which owners of leasehold flats may gain freeholder rights is to share the freehold between them – and employ a management company to take care of common areas;
- in these circumstances, you might also agree to share the costs of building insurance – but make your own arrangements for cover for your contents.



2016 Marketing Resolutions



It appears that each year passes and we don't truly reflect on the marketing activity and its successes in 2015 nor do we look forward and plan for 2016.

It is suggested right here and now that you do both - and soon.

Looking at 2015 will give you some ideas about the kinds of things you tested and didn't go as expected. And, more importantly, those things that worked well that you could look to expand upon in 2016.

Now also may be a good time to start building in some new ideas that you didn't get round to last year.



Trying something new

With online marketing there are a huge number of ways to attract business, and more ideas are being launched every day. If you are not trying a few of these things you could be missing out on a goldmine of low cost, quality, web traffic.



Mobile

One of the major trends in 2015 was mobile. If your site is not mobile friendly or responsive, you will suffer online as a consequence. Especially with Google, as they have made a clear statement that mobile friendly will be given preference in their search results*. Having your site rebuilt or redesigned in 2016 and making sure it is mobile ready will be a great way to start the year in the right way.



Video

One of the other big drivers was video. Video content is a great way for businesses to educate potential customers and also drive traffic. Facebook overtook YouTube as the largest video platform in 2015.**

And with smartphones being more and more geared towards video production, now has never been a better time to shoot videos on your phone.

Making sure you are in a well-lit area and maybe investing in a low cost tripod will give your video a much better professional quality - and then you can upload to Facebook and YouTube to start driving traffic. If you have always struggled to write content, a video could be a great way around this.



Looking for more ideas?

Lead Generation and content marketing are two other ideas you could look to invest in during 2016. Content marketing especially if you are looking for more B2B insurance business that has a longer sales cycle or needs more engagement / education.

Lead Generation is also a useful tool as it can allow you to work with specialists at driving quality leads to your business and work out a return on investment easily.

The New Year is a great time to both reflect and look forward. Why not include your marketing activity in that exercise and get 2016 off to a great start?

* <https://support.google.com/adsense/answer/6196932?hl=en-GB>

** <http://www.socialbakers.com/blog/2335-facebook-video-is-now-bigger-than-youtube-for-brands>

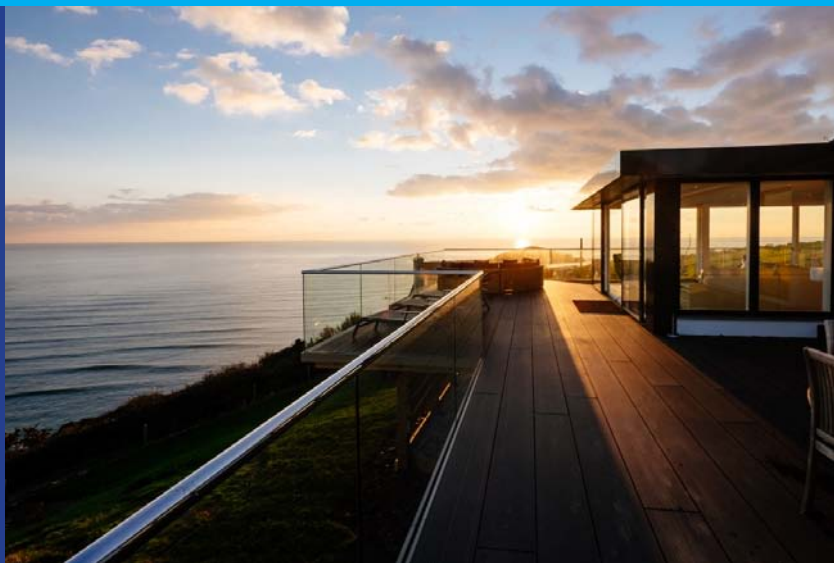
Product Exposed:

UK holiday home insurance

Owning a second home is something over 160,000 Brits do, meaning that the demand for holiday home insurance is ever increasing.

As you may be aware, we recently added AmTrust to our panel of UK Holiday Home insurance providers, providing more choice for your customers.

Here are some frequently asked questions (FAQs) your customers may ask about UK holiday home insurance cover ...



Q. Does the policy cover the costs of alternative accommodation for any guests, should the property be damaged before or during their stay?

Alternative Accommodation cover is included in our policies, up to set limits.

Q. If my holiday home is being used purely by myself and my family and it not let to paying guests, can I use home buildings and contents insurance?

If you have a second or holiday home (so a property that is not your main residence) then you will need holiday home insurance. This is because your second home is unlikely to be occupied all the time, so will face greater risks. A standard owner-occupier buildings and contents insurance policy would not cover these extra risks.

Failure to source the correct cover (i.e. holiday home insurance) will not only mean that any claims will

be invalid but you could also find yourself in trouble with your second home mortgage provider.

This is because having appropriate insurance in place will typically be a condition of your contract with them. If you have the 'wrong' type of cover, you could be forced to pay any outstanding mortgage balance with immediate effect as well as face charges of fraud.

Q. Does your policy include Property Owners liability cover?

Our policies include up to £2m Property Owners liability coverage.

Q. Is my permanently installed Jacuzzi / hot tub / swimming pool covered under the buildings section of the holiday home insurance?

Yes, fixed fittings are covered, but there are some exclusions. For example, if your swimming pool

/ hot tub / Jacuzzi is damaged by storm, flood or weight of snow or damaged by frost, then typically you will not be able to make a claim.

Q. Are freezer contents covered?

No. We do not offer freezer contents cover within our second home insurance policies.

Q. Are any discounts available when I buy my holiday home insurance from you?

Yes, we have varying risk factors that can mean we are able to offer discounts on our policies.

Q. Is malicious damage to contents covered?

Yes it is, provided the person who causes the damage has a lawful right to be within your property (for example, if they are a paying guest).



Previous Caption Competition Winners

Congratulations to last edition's winners with their clever captions for this photo!

The winning caption was from David Knott of Nimmos Insurance Brokers:

'After being framed, roger Rabbit settled into his new insurance broking role'

2nd prize goes to Steven Smith of Henderson Insurance Brokers:

'The ABACUS Underwriter pulled her hare out to ensure she provided the best quote.'

3rd prize goes to Linda Grigor of Brian Thompson Insurance Consultants with:

'Rely on ABACUS to pull something out of the hat!'

Well done to our winners and thank you to everyone who entered!

We look forward to receiving your entries for this edition's competition.



Got a question or need some help and advice?

Then ask Robin!

Most of you have met Robin Gentle, our Business Development Manager, either at ABACUS Do's, Broker events, or when he is on the road visiting different agencies.

And as you know, he is friendly, approachable and above all, very knowledgeable about ABACUS, our products and our services.

What you may not realise is that Robin isn't just available to help when he is in your area – he can be contacted by telephone or email whenever you have a product query or need some help and advice.

Simply email Robin on: robing@sabacus.co.uk or give him a call on 07887 477 209 – he will be more than happy to help!

Broker Spotlight

Ashburnham Insurance

Tony Fassenfelt



1. Tell us about your brokerage.

Ashburnham Insurance Services Ltd have been trading for over 20 years and we specialise in buy to let and public liability insurance. We also have a wholesale landowners liability scheme for brokers.

2. What are your plans for 2016?

We plan on promoting the benefits of our landowner's liability scheme to brokers such as our easy to use quote and buy facility and competitive premiums.

3. Why do you support ABACUS?

ABACUS have been our main provider for landlords insurance for nearly 20 years. We have always found them very competitive and easy to deal with. As brokers themselves we have found them very helpful and knowledgeable with all aspects of the buy to let market.

4. Who are your favourite football team?

Arsenal

5. What hobbies do you have?

Going to the gym when I get the time.

6. What car do you drive?

Mondeo Titanium

7. What is your favourite drink?

Lager

8. What is your favourite takeaway?

Pizza

9. What is your favourite holiday destination?

Andorra skiing

10. Let's hear about a memorable event with ABACUS.

The most memorable event was when Barry took me to Arsenal V Spurs at White Hart Lane. It was Sol Campbell's first game at White Hart lane after transferring to a real team. I think I felt nearly as uncomfortable as he did that game as a Gooner sitting in the home supporter's area.

We pride ourselves on listening and acting upon the feedback you provide. It is this approach that has allowed us to build the products, service and systems you experience today.

If you have any queries, or you wish to tell us about your experience with ABACUS, we always enjoy hearing from you.

We welcome any feedback you may have – good or bad!

You can contact us by phone on 01702 606 312, by fax on 01702 606 369, or by email at agency@sabacus.co.uk.

We look forward to hearing from you.

We Want Your Feedback!



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Produced by iamyourdesigner - 07969 663 847 | 0602

