

PFS president urges industry to embrace RDR and create new model

By Gavin Lumsden | 10:55:02 | 13 November 2007

Carole Nicholls, president of the Personal Finance Society, has called on advisers and providers to embrace the retail distribution review as a last chance to create a more successful model for the financial services industry.

Speaking at the PFS annual conference in Birmingham Nicholls said the level of consumer distrust was proof that the current financial services model had failed.

She urged the industry to work together and face the 'collective challenge' of forging consumer-centric New Model Advisers®.

Delivering the conference's opening speech she said: 'the retail distribution review is a unique opportunity. The Financial Services Authority wants to work with us. This is not a done deal they are asking what we think. We have to move away from old attitudes and think outside the box.'

Nicholls added: 'I call upon providers and all professional standards bodies and networks and advisers - let us work together and use the retail distribution review to create a model that works for the consumer and for us.'

Nicholls expressed dismay at the low level of adviser response to RDR. This prompted a heckle from one member of the audience that it was 'a waste of time'.

Nicholls, a chartered financial planner in Bristol, made a personal plea for insurers to improve transparency in their contracts, particularly in investment bonds.

Returning to her main theme she said the next few years would be marked by achievement as the industry moved to raise standards and embrace qualifications. 'Everybody is climbing a different mountain,' she said.

PFS has 24,000 members, comprising of 1,000 top tier chartered financial planners, 9,000 diploma holders with the remainder at certificate level.