



**BANK OF ENGLAND**

# News release

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## **New Agent for Central Southern England**

The Bank is pleased to announce the appointment of Chris Piper as its new Agent for Central Southern England, with effect from 2 March 2009. Mr Piper succeeds Mr John Whitley who retires after 13 years at the Bank including 5 years at the Agency. Mr Piper will be assisted by the Deputy Agent for Central Southern England, Andrew Holder.

Speaking about his new role, Chris Piper said, "The Bank's network of twelve Agencies across the UK, and the information they gather each month, make a direct and valuable contribution to the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee. The task of the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee would be far more difficult without the timely information provided by the Agencies. I am pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to this process. Central Southern England is home to many businesses, including national and international companies, both large and small, and across all sectors, and I am very much looking forward to meeting and learning from the Bank's many contacts."

The Bank's twelve Agencies around the UK have some 600-700 business contacts each, representing their region's economic profile. They also liaise closely with key business groups such as the Chambers of Commerce and CBI. Agents analyse the confidential information contacts provide to them and report their assessment to the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee each month to help build a picture of overall business conditions. A summary of the overall assessment is published monthly. For contacts, the Agents in turn explain the Bank's view of the UK economy and outlook as well as arranging for Committee members themselves to meet with them and explain their monthly interest rate decisions at first-hand.

### **Notes to Editors**

Chris Piper, 52, MBA, joined the Bank of England in 1975. From 1996-2000 he helped establish the new Agency for Wales as the Bank's Deputy Agent for Wales. During 2000-2003 he contributed towards the development of support for the monetary policy process specialising in IT and business process improvement. Most recently he has been the Head of Information Systems and Technology Division at the Bank.

More information on the Bank's Agencies and their work can be found at

<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetarypolicy/Pages/agencies/default.aspx>.