

# Properties go online at a discount

By Carol Hayes

Ann Collins's career has followed the property market from Britain to Ireland and through the rise and fall of the economy.

Recognising the tougher times in the Irish property market, her latest venture is a website listing properties in Ireland and overseas for sale at discounted prices. Collins aims to match sellers and buyers through the website and regular auctions.

Collins grew up in Athboy, Co Meath, but left for London in the mid-1980s and spent the next ten years working her way up through the property business.

"I started off my career as a secretary while going to school at night and eventually became a property negotiator," said Collins. "I finally worked my way up to branch manager at Woolwich Property Services in Britain."

In the mid-1990s, she returned to Ireland with her husband to run a family-owned business in Athboy and raise their three children. As the children got older, Collins decided to get back into the property business.

"I began selling overseas properties in 2002 through connections I had formed in Britain. In 2003, I became shareholder and managing director of Newfound Property

**Ann  
Collins**

**Company:** Ann Collins Property / [www.property-auction.ie](http://www.property-auction.ie)

**Position:** founder and managing director

**Location:** Athboy, Co Meath

International Ireland, selling five-star properties all over the world," she said.

The following year she set up Ann Collins Property to sell overseas property to Irish buyers. The firm focuses mainly on the US, Canada, Cape Verde, Dubai and the Caribbean.

Its customers are a mix of investors and holiday home buyers.

With tougher times in the property market, Collins branched out again, setting up [www.property-auction.ie](http://www.property-auction.ie) to connect property sellers and buyers.

"Like every business in Ireland during this global credit crunch, we have had to assess our current business and see where the niche in the market lay," Collins said.

"If a property is not selling,



**Ann Collins: aims to match buyers and sellers through her website**

all factors regarding its saleability will be revisited – including the price." With [www.property-auction.ie](http://www.property-auction.ie), sellers who are willing to sell at a discounted price can list their properties on the site and prospective buyers can go online to browse properties. Collins plans to hold regular auctions in the Citywest Hotel in Dublin.

If a property is sold at an

auction, the purchaser must pay a non-refundable 6 per cent deposit on the day of the sale. The purchaser will then have seven days to exchange contracts and about a month to complete the sale.

If the sale doesn't go ahead, the 6 per cent deposit is split between the seller and Collins, who described the system as a "win/win situation for all involved".