

security. This means that higher-rate taxpayers can double their money in five years.

The Bessa Blue-Chip companies acquire residential properties with vacant possession from Barclays Direct Mortgage Service. During the five-year investment period, the properties are let under assured-tenancy leases. After five years, Barclays Bank may be required to repurchase the properties at whatever prices are necessary to provide shareholders with £1.20 for each £1 share.

Higher-rate taxpayers receive 40 per cent tax relief on their investment.

This is the only scheme I know of where such a high return is offered with the backing of such a good guarantor. There are one or two other schemes offering slightly higher returns but the guarantors are not in the same class.

Leading IFAs, such as Towry Law and Thomsons, consulting actuary William Mercer Fraser and independent network DBS, are supporting the scheme in a major way.

Bessa Blue-Chip is fulfilling a social purpose in that the money invested in the property will go towards providing accommodation at a reasonable price. The only people losing out are the Inland Revenue but the Government says it is happy for that to be the case until the end of next year.

It is believed that the information related to claims that were likely to be faced by

## Sacked fund manager takes L&G to tribunal

Former Legal & General smaller companies fund manager Eoin Costello is making a claim for unfair dismissal against the company.

Costello was sacked at the end of August for writing an unauthorised article for the *Investors Chronicle* entitled, "How to spot a company going bust".

However, L&G chief press officer John Morgan says Costello's departure was not a direct result of its publication.

Costello says: "I am not happy with what they have done and I am not going to leave it at that. I am going to the industrial tribunal on the grounds of unfair dismissal as a first step."

He also disputes the statement from L&G that the article was unauthorised and was against his contract.

He says: "I told three or four directors and at no stage did they tell me it was against my contract."

Costello had been with the company for four years and has not yet been replaced.

Legal & General refuses to comment.

any circumstances that might affect the acceptance of the insurance. Non-disclosure c

## Melville plan ge

By Iain Anderson

Building societies have given a mixed reception to Nationwide chief executive Tim Melville-Ross's proposals for reviving the housing market.

His five-point plan, put forward on Channel 4 last weekend, includes:

- introduction of a mortgage benefit, similar to housing benefit, for homeowners on low incomes.
- Increase in mortgage relief for first-time buyers for a limited period.

## Irish L

By James Hopegood

Irish Life is considering whether to launch a major medical expenses insurance contract that pays out a free cash lump sum to policyholders undergoing surgery.

So far, only General Portfolio offers such a contract.

The General Portfolio was launched in July and written through its permanent health insurance fund, tak