

"SARCASTIC LAND LORD IN ADVERT STORM

THE chairman of a property company seeking a Bute manager "with the guts to kick someone between the legs as we evict them and their two year old child on to the street" insists his job advert was just being sarcastic.

Mark Kennedy-Stewart, the founder of Caduceus Investments Ltd, who has recently bought property in Rothesay and Port Bannatyne, told us he had no regrets over the advert for a 'west coast manager' to run the company's portfolio on the island.

The position has been

Craig BORLAND

withdrawn after an attempt to purchase the long-empty Buckingham Terrace block of flats in Port Bannatyne fell through.

But Mr Kennedy-Stewart has already bought

flats in West Princes Street in Rothesay and in Castle Street at the Port.

An advertisement was placed on the company's website (www.kennedy-stewart.com) looking for "a strong willed individual who is able to deal with a very wide range of customer [sic] from differing social backgrounds".

The ad continued: "While you will have a pleasant personality to deal with sales and client relationships, "the guts to kick someone between the legs as we evict them and their two year old child onto the street" would be an advantage to the role."

The same website carried an advert for a 'tourism development manager' to market holidays on the island to the middle class populations of Russia and Kazakhstan.

Mr Kennedy-Stewart confirmed that despite the acquisition of other properties on the island, for which he plans comprehensive renovation, the posts advertised would no longer need to be filled.

"We were in the process of acquiring 30 properties from a Murray McDonald," he said, "but that has fallen through and will not be going ahead."

As to the wording of the advertisement, Mr Kennedy-Stewart said: "That's basically sarcasm.

"We are landlords. We look for people that have

the ability to stand up to people that are very downward-looking in terms of social responsibility."

Asked if he had any regrets about the tone of the ad, Mr Kennedy-Stewart replied: "No."

Since our conversation last Friday, Mr Kennedy-Stewart has posted an entry on his online diary, (also known as a 'weblog', or simply a 'blog'), also available through www.kennedy-stewart.com, attempting to clarify the situation.

"I have a strong sense of humour," he wrote, "and anyone working in our company has to cope with that, and with tenants who do not pay the rent at times.

"And sorry, but the number of times that I have been screamed at that I can't evict a mother with children is beyond count."

Nick Beckwith of Jacqueline's Property Services, agents on the island for both Mr McDonald and Mr Kennedy-Stewart, confirmed that Buckingham Terrace had not been sold, and said redevelopment work "would start soon".

Gordon Sutherland, the manager of Bute Advice Centre, said: "As a charity, we offer a free, confidential housing information and advice service, and as such this type of advert is not helpful at all.

"We are here to help people who have problems,

and this type of advert is not going to help people with their housing problems at all."