

**Fine & Country Associate growth surges alongside premium market activity**

Premium estate agency, Fine & Country has seen an influx of new associates joining as the upper quartile of the market continues to surge. This is according to Nicky Stevenson, MD of Fine & Country UK, who says that 78 associates have joined the brand with a further nine candidates in the process of being onboarded which will bring the number up to 87 by the end of next week. She adds that nine of the associates are based at the brand’s iconic Park Lane office, while the other associates are spread throughout the country with a large contingent in the Midlands.

“While the property market has seen high levels of activity across the board since reopening in May, the premium market has performed particularly well as the demand for larger properties and more space continues. This is evidenced by the latest Rightmove House Price Index, which states that the trend of up-sizing to larger properties has continued at pace during the past month, leading to record asking prices in the second-stepper sector,” says Stevenson. “The premium housing market continues to outstrip figures seen during 2019 both in terms of the number of new instructions coming to market, as well as the number of Sold Subject to Contract (SSTC) and sales agreed figures. The increased activity has given rise to opportunity for growth in the top-end of the market and we have seen an increase in the number of associates looking to join the brand as a result.”

She adds that while many thought that the Covid-19 pandemic and financial uncertainty would lessen the appeal of a self-employment model, it seems that it is having the opposite impact as the situation has challenged many within the industry to rethink their business and future. “This year has been a year of challenges and adaption. The associate model provides an opportunity for experienced, entrepreneurially minded agents to own their own business without having the overheads of running a high-street or traditional agency. Low overhead costs and a high earning potential offers an attractive opportunity with more control over your destiny,” Stevenson comments.

Jonathan Handford, Director at Fine & Country UK, says that he believes the reason people are coming to Fine & Country is that they recognise being a part of a big international network and brand is helping them to secure more instructions, as well as being able to command better fees. “A lot of these individuals are experienced agents who are looking for an avenue into the upper quartile of the property market and they know they may not be able to get that with some of the other self-employed brands because they don’t have a strong presence in that price range.”

According to Sean Newman, partner of several Fine & Country offices who has been working in the premium property market for over 20 years, becoming a Fine & Country associate is beneficial to an agent’s career progression in three main ways – moving up on the type of property and clients you deal with, moving up on job role from a Manager or Lister to running your own business and Moving up on income, which has the potential to double in 12 months. “Other advantages include flexible hours to suit your lifestyle, not having to sit in an office and being able to work from anywhere, being able to choose the clients you work with and being able to offer a more personal service. It is about quality rather than quantity and you can do the fun part of the job such as listing and selling houses, rather than the other ‘stuff’ like reports, meetings, micromanaging and being micromanaged. More ‘job’ satisfaction, more fulfilment and ultimately happier clients,” adds Newman.

Speaking about his decision to become associate with the brand, Terry Robinson from Fine & Country Banbury and Buckingham, says: “I had spent too long in the corporate world working for others and I felt I had a flair for the industry but it was always being held back. I realised that I was never going to be happy working in the corporate environment and decided to take the plunge. I fell back in love with estate agency again the day I joined Fine & Country to run my own business where I can focus on the things I do best, listing houses, selling them, chasing them through to completion and then prospecting for more.”

When asked about the advantages of being an associate, Robinson says flexibility. “This is the biggest thing I love. I am able to work around my children, work from home, work late, deal with enquiries on Sundays and just put everything into it to reap the rewards whilst being able to relax and enjoy my own time too. I would say another big thing is the earning potential. We all come to work to earn money which is the added bonus of doing something you love. Since joining Fine & Country, I have been able to buy things, see places and do things that I never could have done in the corporate world,” adds Robinson. “I would say that joining the brand is the best thing I have ever done in my career and would urge anybody else to do the same or to at least tune into any posts or events that explains what we are all about. It has changed my life and it will change other lives too.”

If you would like to find out more about Fine and Country and becoming a premium market estate agent, please contact nicky.stevenson@fineandcountry.com in confidence.

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**Editors Notes:**

Fine & Country specialises in the sale and rental of prime residential properties. The company has offices in 300 locations around the world including in the UK, Cape Verde, Cyprus, Germany, Mauritius, The Channel Islands, USA, France, Namibia, Portugal, Spain, South Africa, West Africa, Russia, Australia and Hungary. Fine & Country has won Best Estate Agency Marketing and Best International Estate Agency Marketing seven times in the past 10 years at the International Property Awards.