

# CITY A.M. CLUB

PARTNER CONTENT

An introduction to some of the myriad benefits of joining our exclusive Club

**B**uyAssociation CEO Caroline Marshall-Roberts leads the disruptive, award-winning investment company that specialises in emerging UK property assets. We sat down with her to find out what it's like being a powerful woman in a historically male-orientated industry.

## HOW DID BUYASSOCIATION GET STARTED?

We were founded 14 years ago in London. We began as a content and media business providing property investment advice and related content to property people, investors and partners including AOL, Rightmove, GMTV and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

Over time we have evolved to continually strip out the costly layers between investor and developer leading to today's model whereby we offer our audience the ability to transact directly with developers in key locations and – crucially – at the earliest possible opportunity.

## WHY PROPERTY INVESTMENT?

We started out offering advice on all aspects of property ownership.

As the business has evolved, however, we have kept one principle at the forefront of what we do: we listen to the audience. Early on, investment articles and podcasts gained most traction, so we did more of them. We would then get asked to recommend credible agents, or property professionals, and over time our focus has moved to delivering the leanest route for our audience to do business.

Over the last 12 months we raised £800m in funding for various major projects in the North of England, sourcing some of the best property investment opportunities in the market today.

## WHY DO YOU JUST FOCUS ON THE NORTH OF ENGLAND?

That's not strictly true. We go where we feel the market is heading. While our HQ is now in Manchester, the bulk of our UK investor base is from London, with the second largest sector being Far East investors that we service from our Hong Kong office. However, it's correct that the bulk of the projects are in the many emerging Northern cities: this is simply due to growth.

We will most certainly carry London stock again at some point but right now the audience is rightly targeting the North, which offers huge potential and stronger yields.

## LANDLORDS AND DEVELOPERS CAN HAVE A BAD REPUTATION IN THE MEDIA. WHY IS THAT?

While there are some bad players, it's largely unfounded. It's a shame, because they are generally a huge force for good. Aside from providing thousands of homes for people, a lot of investment has gone into renovating disused and abandoned buildings, and regenerating run-down parts of town into communities people would like to live and make a home in. Without this investment, we'd see fewer new homes and less funding for local government.



## CITY A.M. CLUB PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Property investment consultancy BuyAssociation is offering members access to exclusive networking events

### ARE DEVELOPERS DOING ENOUGH ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

The UK needs to build more homes. The market has been outstripping supply for a while, especially in regional city centre locations. I do think more can – and *must* – be done for affordable housing.

However, it's a very complex issue and extends beyond developers. What I would say is that it's great to see the huge level of investment going into building and regenerating our high streets and city centres. Then developers building these new homes will provide quality housing and establish communities. And at the same time, they'll be increasing supply in the market.

### WHERE ARE YOU SEEING MOST GROWTH?

While London has long dominated the property market, we've seen huge spikes in interest for investment in regional cities. A lot of investors are now looking North for returns, in regions that we and other industry leaders, such as JLL and Savills, feel are really undervalued and continue to show signs of growth. And there's the huge

benefit that many of these cities are at price points much lower than London. And the world is changing – Birmingham is going to be 37 minutes from London by train, so many businesses are moving into the area. And yet compare the price of property in Croydon for instance, which is around 28 minutes into London.

Cities such as Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Preston and other outer commuter towns are seeing great potential, and they have the huge benefit of price points much lower than equivalent properties in the South. This ultimately leads to better rental yields and less money spent on stamp duty.

### HOW HAVE YOU FOUND BEING A WOMAN IN THE PROPERTY INDUSTRY?

Well I've never been anything but, so I've nothing to compare it to! But it's a question I've had before. The short answer is that it's great. The market is full of brilliant people and what we do is a little different from the traditional agent; we are an entrepreneurial and agile company, and we're all about timing and access for the investor. If

## HOW TO JOIN

Booking an annual membership couldn't be easier



The City A.M. Club is your passport to the City, giving you access to networking opportunities, events and exclusive offers. City A.M. has collected more than 50 partners, each providing a totally unique, curated experience for City A.M. Club Members. They range from leading lifestyle brands, to your favourite restaurants.

For more information visit: [CLUB.CITYAM.COM](http://CLUB.CITYAM.COM)

To apply, log on to our Club website at [club.cityam.com](http://club.cityam.com) and input your details – the whole process takes just minutes. An annual membership costs £240 – an amount that could easily be recouped in a matter of weeks once you start reaping the rewards offered by our partners. We look forward to seeing you on the inside.

anything, I guess it helps to exaggerate the point that the market and the way investors do business is changing.

### WHAT ARE YOU OFFERING CITY A.M. CLUB MEMBERS?

We offer exclusive deals, and direct access to some of the UK's top residential developers through our monthly City A.M. Club Member Breakfast Briefings, the first one of which was held in April. It's a

great opportunity to meet us face to face, and to get up to speed on the state of the property market beyond London. If you can't join us on the day, we'd be happy to book members a free private consultation, or readers can sign up to receive early access to new property developments.

● To find out more about BuyAssociation go to [buyassociation.co.uk](http://buyassociation.co.uk) or call 0333 123 0320