

00;00;05;11 - 00;00;26;24

Speaker 1

Welcome to the people Property Place podcast with me. Your host, Matthew Watts, founder and managing director of Rockbourne. This is a podcast where I share the stories, views, opinions and career journeys of the movers, shakers, innovators and leaders in the real estate industry.

00;00;26;27 - 00;01;01;15

Speaker 1

Welcome to the People Proxy Place podcast. Today we are joined by Alexander Morris, Development Director at B Geo. Biggio is a leading top ten global real estate private equity investment management advisor and globally recognized provider of real estate services. Its specialist central London office fund, Well-Put, was formed in 2001 and is the largest unlisted specialist real estate fund to invest in and develop central London offices.

00;01;01;17 - 00;01;24;25

Speaker 1

The fund currently holds a portfolio of nine assets comprising over 1,000,000 square foot of accommodation, spread across central London's core submarkets. Alexander has previously worked at Tishman Spa, Minerva plc, as LM associates, as well as Gardner and Theobald, and it gives me great pleasure that he joins me on the podcast today. Welcome.

00;01;24;28 - 00;01;26;00

Speaker 2

Thank you for inviting me.

00;01;26;04 - 00;01;49;08

Speaker 1

Not at all. Well, look, you've had a fascinating career. You've you've managed to reinvent yourself time and time and time again. And I know development director as a title. It doesn't quite do justice in terms of the depth and breadth of the role. You actually, do, but a place that I always like to start these conversations is how and why did you get into real estate?

00;01;49;11 - 00;01;50;18

Speaker 1

00;01;50;20 - 00;02;09;27

Speaker 2

Back in 1990, when I finished school, I didn't want to go to university. I went to look at a job, and unfortunately, we were in a tough time. We were in a recession, couldn't find a job. My father is a fellow of the Royal Institution. Surveyors brought a white book home and said, son, have a look at this.

00;02;09;27 - 00;02;26;21

Speaker 2

So I went through this book and so I'm quite good at maths. I quite enjoyed being part of a team choosing is it? I then phoned up, Bristol Polytechnic or UWI and asked for a place, and that's how I got onto a SHS degree.

00;02;26;25 - 00;02;31;09

Speaker 1

So you grew up your dad was in property? Yeah. Which, which part of properties is.

00;02;31;09 - 00;02;31;18

Speaker 2

General.

00;02;31;18 - 00;02;42;03

Speaker 1

Practice? So he's a general practice surveyor doing a bit of rating valuation, property management, leasing, investment type work. Yeah. You never really drawn drawn to that. Not.

00;02;42;03 - 00;03;02;11

Speaker 2

No. Not really. If I'm honest. I wanted to make quick money, get out into the world, get a wife and school and all. I saw with, university was more work and that is the difference. Whereas my father said, time to go and find an alternative path. You tried that and it didn't work. So.

00;03;02;14 - 00;03;08;25

Speaker 1

And what what kind of, What kind of kid were you at school growing up?

00;03;08;27 - 00;03;27;00

Speaker 2

I enjoyed sport. I enjoyed my nights. I'd less enjoyed sitting in front of, teachers. I had a lot of fun at. I went to a great school. Still got some very good friends from that. And that was life. Life and sport enjoying itself. And less so about,

00;03;27;03 - 00;03;43;00

Speaker 1

Education and the thoughts of doing academics and essays just didn't exactly excite, you know, but having looked to that paper, you just saw, actually real estate, the tangible aspect of it. Cuz seeing, you know, that is that is a career that I could see myself in.

00;03;43;02 - 00;03;59;00

Speaker 2

Yeah. But I think it partly was because the maths I actually really enjoyed maths. So I was lectured on that. Maths was an enjoyable part of my day at school, and when I read you need to be good at maths, that seemed like a good connection. I also didn't want to do the same as my father, who's same with my brother.

00;03;59;01 - 00;04;16;11

Speaker 2

My brother was super gifted at sport. I didn't want to go to the same school as him because he was so good at something, so I wanted to do something different, like the idea of real estate, but I didn't really know what I was doing. So I went for four years of university to find an opportunity and this is where I am after that.

00;04;16;13 - 00;04;23;15

Speaker 1

So you did those those four years, as it were? Yeah. Did you do a sandwich year in between? Yes. And what did you do for that sandwich year?

00;04;23;16 - 00;04;44;10

Speaker 2

I actually did two of the 6 to 6 months I worked for a contractor and I prison, not literally in a prison, but doing work on a prison and another six months with a project management firm doing a project out in Redding. So I did two sides, a client side and contracting side. And that's what actually made me make the decision.

00;04;44;10 - 00;04;45;21

Speaker 2

I wanted to go client side.

00;04;45;29 - 00;04;57;23

Speaker 1

Interesting. So having graduated you an advisory side, is that kind of get your letters and get get a grounding. And so you landed a job and gone and see Theobald in a short time, is that right?

00;04;57;26 - 00;04;59;09

Speaker 2

That's right.

00;04;59;11 - 00;05;06;11

Speaker 1

And so can you just talk to me about that period at some of the projects that you're working on and that kind of journey from kind of graduating?

00;05;06;14 - 00;05;28;04

Speaker 2

So in the early days, as a graduate of Goner Sibbald, we were working for the for the old partnership, and a graduate was someone that was there to learn and understand and be taught. So I worked in retail elements, I worked in offices. I did a quite a varied scope, so it was logistics. I would be in logistics.

00;05;28;04 - 00;05;53;18

Speaker 2

I was spread across quite a few different partners, and then I focused on retail amazingly, and I had the opportunity to work on a super scheme, which was the London Eye or the Millennium Wheel as I knew it. And that happened to be the retail team. And then after retail, I then had this opportunity turning into offices, and that's when I started at 30, as which I'm sure you'll ask about later.

00;05;53;21 - 00;06;05;19

Speaker 1

So you transition to, to offices, you got some experience in retail transition offices day to day. You said you were there to kind of help. What were the skills, what were the projects and all the what were the parts of the projects that you were involved with?

00;06;05;19 - 00;06;28;14

Speaker 2

ASIC's so varied again from the start, helping someone acquire land. I was there with the developer creating values. I would be doing valuations, I would go into final accounts. I would then do the day to day estimating. So I did everything other than build the quantities. I remember doing that a university and think I do not want to do builds the quantities.

00;06;28;21 - 00;06;41;09

Speaker 2

So I didn't do any of those. But because I worked from various partners on various projects, I got the breadth and start end, which again was a great education. And I and I thank God unsayable for for that.

00;06;41;11 - 00;06;48;28

Speaker 1

So someone listening to this, can we what does a quantity surveyor like. Why is a quantity. So they're so important on a project.

00;06;49;01 - 00;07;13;15

Speaker 2

So I think it's probably different today than it was when I was doing it. So when I was doing it, it was about being the accountant by being the person that helps the client and the team protect the expenditure on the project. So whether or not setting the budget, whether it's managing it during the process, looking at variations, looking at changes and then agreeing a final account within the overall budget effectively, that's what I was I was doing.

00;07;13;17 - 00;07;27;28

Speaker 1

And so you were doing that from a financial perspective, but also kind of learning how to deliver or see a project evolve as well. Talk to me about that transition to offices, and why did you want to move into to offices at that stage?

00;07;28;01 - 00;07;47;06

Speaker 2

So I was a very ambitious, young person that wanted to be the senior partner, regardless of board, as quickly as possible. There was an opportunity that came to go around table, which was to be a part of, the first tower in the City of London since, NatWest tower, which was probably 30 years prior to that.

00;07;47;09 - 00;08;09;01

Speaker 2

I happened to be a young person that was available, and I went to that interview. I met an individual that I'm still friends with now, and I thought to myself, this is the moment. If I get this fully focused, this is going to give me that path to senior partner. This is that moment where I want to push forward.

00;08;09;04 - 00;08;27;27

Speaker 2

And that is the transition for me to offices. So I took a gamble because it was a tower. It didn't have planning permission. It was a great two star listed building. It had its challenges. Many partners in government table didn't think it was something that would actually be achieved because its towers haven't been built. And I thought, this is the moment.

00;08;27;29 - 00;08;34;17

Speaker 1

So you you kind of became part of that project. Yeah. And that was a roaring success, I believe.

00;08;34;17 - 00;08;51;29

Speaker 2

So, I worked from October 1997 to the end of 2004, so it's quite a long period from the day it was acquired all the way through to the day it was leased and handed over one project, central London. And I think most people know what such a summary axis.

00;08;52;01 - 00;08;53;00

Speaker 1

And if they don't.

00;08;53;03 - 00;08;55;17

Speaker 2

If they don't, you know, it's the Gherkin.

00;08;55;20 - 00;09;00;13

Speaker 1

The Gherkin is it's more, I guess better known, right? Rather than.

00;09;00;16 - 00;09;19;25

Speaker 2

Yeah, it was it was a name brought out by, I think it was the it was either the Evening Standard or it was a criticism of the work. And until Norman Foster actually said the word gherkin, it was used as a negative. Now it uses the positive and you say Gherkin anywhere in the world. Pretty much most people know what that gherkin is.

00;09;19;27 - 00;09;40;29

Speaker 1

And so why having kind of done that project and spent the time and effort and you touched on earlier having got your sandwich, knowing that the client side was the kind of the route that you wanted to get, get to. Why do you think kind of why did you spend nine years on the advisory side before you looked at making the pivot or making a move away from GNT?

00;09;41;01 - 00;10;07;17

Speaker 2

I think it's to start from the beginning and go to the end. I learned so much in that period of time from from acquiring to design development to budgeting to leasing to construction to selling absolutely everything in that one, one moment. And it's also an incredibly iconic building that everybody knew about. So it meant that I was learning.

00;10;07;17 - 00;10;27;07

Speaker 2

I worked incredibly hard. I spent all my time at that project learning from people that were much more experienced. And as I say, the the individual that I work with that I'm still friends with today. And I use he is he I am the mentee, he's the mentor. And I still ask him questions today.

00;10;27;09 - 00;10;45;03

Speaker 1

And so it was the fact that you could stay on such an iconic project from start to finish and really gain, experience across everything front to back, back to front. That's kind of what kept you there. To kind of see that through. You left after nine years or so, 2000, late 2003, and you moved to Elm Associates.

00;10;45;03 - 00;10;48;14

Speaker 1

Why? Why did you move and how did that come about?

00;10;48;16 - 00;11;08;27

Speaker 2

Part of it was I wanted something different. I wanted to, I don't quite a bit of project management in that scope with the study summary acts, and I wanted to move away from just being cuz I wanted to expand. I also felt I could do it on my own. I felt confident that I wasn't going to get to the path of being senior partner.

00;11;08;27 - 00;11;36;10

Speaker 2

It changed. I didn't want to be a Remainer six. I wanted to have more. This was my path, so I resigned. Actually the week before I went to the Rugby World Cup final, I went on holiday and I resigned saying I wanted to do something different. I set up Elm Associates and I worked for two, maybe three years doing development management, project management and supporting others, in their aspirations going forward.

00;11;36;12 - 00;11;38;27

Speaker 1

So you set up your own own business at that stage? Just you?

00;11;38;29 - 00;11;40;14

Speaker 2
Yep. Just me.

00;11;40;16 - 00;11;53;10

Speaker 1

And was that a humbling experience or was it, yeah. An enjoyable thing that you relished having kind of been released from, more of a partnership led business to being a bit more entrepreneurial and.

00;11;53;12 - 00;12;17;05

Speaker 2

I mean, it had its different challenges. I was incredibly lucky. My wife and I, she was working. So therefore financially, it was an easy decision for me to make. The thing about money coming in the door, but it was about that. Go and get that opportunity. Go and find, the idea it wasn't that I just, disregarded being a partnership.

00;12;17;08 - 00;12;41;03

Speaker 2

I felt that I had more autonomy. It meant that I could go out and cycle and run and swim and do my work. I could go and work for the people that I wanted to and express myself slightly differently. Rather than being in a partnership where you were doing that single single role and and if you see where my career has gone, I've definitely moved from that single source to that multi-functional.

00;12;41;05 - 00;12;47;00

Speaker 2

And that was probably that decision has changed me into to what I'm doing now.

00;12;47;02 - 00;12;58;12

Speaker 1

And you did that for just shy of three years before moving to, Minerva plc as a project director. Can you just talk to me about that, that transition, why you did that, how it came about it?

00;12;58;14 - 00;13;19;19

Speaker 2

Well, I think it's quite an easy choice. I made it for a career I moved from I live Associates to Minerva. I actually did consultancy work for them for about a year or 18 months, looking at a scheme that was a tower in the city. And how do we get best value? Because raising money at that time was quite difficult.

00;13;19;22 - 00;13;41;03

Speaker 2

So I worked with them, got a new planning permission, and at that point, again, you planning commission, they offered me a job. So I looked at another 3,000,000ft² in the heart of the city. I could call my own. I, I wanted to then as my own deliver and present it so I made a a career choice. Not necessarily about anything other than that.

00;13;41;03 - 00;13;56;21

Speaker 2

I wanted to be a part of this project, and with that, it set my CV up as another strong city office to support my career going forward. So it was a very much a career path for me as Alexander then really going to work for Minerva because of Minerva.

00;13;56;23 - 00;14;14;02

Speaker 1

And was it a difficult choice to move away from running your own business at this stage, or was it kind of a part of my ego? I can see the bigger opportunity and actually, yeah, the career choice and the CV building, the, the project association, that is that is really what I want to be doing longer term.

00;14;14;04 - 00;14;32;08

Speaker 2

That was the goal. I happened to be I knew one of the individuals working there that invited me in for, meeting. He he work with me, study summary act. So I knew very well he was suggesting this was a good project to work on. And once I looked under the hood, you know, working with Grimshaw.

00;14;32;08 - 00;14;57;00

Speaker 2

Previous I'd worked fosters great architects to work with. Big scheme, powerful scheme. And it's still sitting there today is a very prominent, project. So again, it wasn't because of Minerva. It was because I had this opportunity on this project knowing that my goal is to be a central London, you know, office developer. And I have two on my bank that started in 1997, finished in 2011.

00;14;57;06 - 00;15;11;24

Speaker 1

So when did that kind of come into your psyche? That that is what you wanted to do? Is that was that way back in the days when you kind of put your hand up and said, I want to be on this study, Saint Mary's project, or was it kind of having delivered that you go, actually, this is what I want to do.

00;15;11;25 - 00;15;13;23

Speaker 1

This is what I want to create.

00;15;13;25 - 00;15;34;14

Speaker 2

So taking study summary on a currency table, I want you to be the best SHS to get to to senior partner. I sort of changed my view, having met this individual that helped me and spent a lot of time with me, give me other opportunities. So I would say within 3 to 4 years I knew the SHS wasn't for me.

00;15;34;16 - 00;15;47;21

Speaker 2

I knew that I wanted to have a more broader opportunity as well as have the chance of helping others, which is same with what's the individual did. And to be able to do that, I needed to get higher up, be more, be more.

00;15;47;21 - 00;15;50;12

Speaker 1

Responsible and specialize or have a kind of a niche.

00;15;50;12 - 00;16;08;10

Speaker 2

To. Well, I think the thing is, you know, I love London. I've lived all my life in London. Central London offices are the best in the world. And I will say that irrespective of what other people say, it is a great opportunity and I live here, my family are here, so why else would I work anywhere else?

00;16;08;12 - 00;16;26;03

Speaker 1

You. You're with Minerva for, three and a half years or so. Just shy of three and a half years. Can you just talk to me about delivering, that scheme or the scheme and the kind of different parts of that, that, of that development process as well that you're involved with?

00;16;26;06 - 00;16;53;14

Speaker 2

So I sort of explained earlier about it was iteration, the new planning commission. It's still three quarters

million square feet. So sort of a big, big chunk, I got supported by the senior management, and it was about looking at, a market which you think about what happens is 2007, 2008, Minerva had one point 5,000,000ft² of offices in central London plus a residential scheme.

00;16;53;17 - 00;17;28;00

Speaker 2

So my job in that time was to deliver the best products on time, on budget, so that we could. Lisa. And that was part of that key role that I had at at Minerva. So I learned a lot about how to, get the team to work together, how to not value engineers, but how to get the best out of a project financially, you know, working with contractors, working with subcontractors, working out the best way to deliver that end goal, which had to be completed on time and to allow us to lease.

00;17;28;02 - 00;17;47;12

Speaker 2

And then then leasing started and then again, this new, new opportunity, I had done it a study spirit expert leasing was great stuff about marketing suite start talk about how you sell buildings, how do you move forward. And we did a pre lease and that prerelease. We were in an organization called Lockton. I'm still friends with those individuals at Lockton.

00;17;47;12 - 00;18;06;12

Speaker 2

You know 16 years later which is because we worked together to deliver that. Then there was another legal firm that's still there. So that I learned a lot at Minerva, and I thank them for giving me the opportunity to, to continue the exposure into properties.

00;18;06;14 - 00;18;13;09

Speaker 1

And at the end of one project, you're looking for the next project. And is that when Tishman came came knocking or. Well, interesting.

00;18;13;09 - 00;18;39;00

Speaker 2

Enough, the individuals I referred to at 30 St Mary acts, he employed an individual called Tom Farrow. Tom Farrow was the head of development for Tishman Spire out of New York, happened to be having dinner with my, ex-colleague and said they're looking for a new person because someone had resigned. I got a phone call, went to meet Tom, and the rest is history.

00;18;39;00 - 00;18;59;19

Speaker 2

But I think Tishman Spire is, I know, name a fantastic name in, in North America. And with the recommendation of my mentor, it seemed that solutely the right choice to go. And especially the link between his mentee and mentor as well, becoming my my ultimate boss felt like the right answer.

00;18;59;21 - 00;19;13;05

Speaker 1

And so the mandate at that time was still central London offices. Yeah. And so can you just talk to me about schemes that you were involved with and, what you did during that, that tenure at Tishman.

00;19;13;07 - 00;19;39;29

Speaker 2

So to larger schemes, very similar type roles. Sorry. So Mary Acts was an owner occupied building. So in, in, addition spire there was a relationship with Goldman Sachs. Goldman Sachs spire delivered their New York headquarters. They wanted to do not a European headquarters. So spire were employed to be the developer on their behalf.

00;19;39;29 - 00;20;10;25

Speaker 2

Very see base not not investment base, fee based. And so my job for eight years at the time I was at spa was deliver one point 2,000,000ft² of Goldman Sachs European headquarters. The second one at the same time was doing that was a project called Verde Verde in Victoria. That was between 2011 2016, an office refurbishment, custom carve, about 400,000ft².

00;20;10;28 - 00;20;38;09

Speaker 2

Acquired it off the governments who were in a lease there and went through redevelopment planning permission all the way through the process to leasing all the way to the end to selling it. So in that time, those are probably the two larger ones. I also worked on a couple of listed buildings. I got some planning permission for great two star listed buildings redevelopment of Smithson Plaza, which is, quite an interesting building.

00;20;38;09 - 00;20;58;28

Speaker 2

It's one of the tallest buildings in Westminster. 360 degree views of London. Fantastic space, great two star listed. And we had an opportunity of leasing that, 200 pounds plus at the time was a big a big mover in the, in the dials. But, again, the great pleasure to work

00;20;59;01 - 00;21;21;13

Speaker 1

Can we just touch on sustainability, and ESG because that is, that is being a kind of a core, a core value, I guess, of yourself personally, in something you've been doing for, for a very long time, print being popular, let alone essential right now, where where is that come from, and why have you been such an advocate?

00;21;21;15 - 00;21;24;05

Speaker 1

When it comes to the industry.

00;21;24;07 - 00;21;44;21

Speaker 2

I guess there's 2 or 3 reasons, but the first one is to, to go back to, to the day that was 2000 when we acquired it. The first hole I saw the carbon analysis done by Titian Spa was in 2012, and that was birdie. So we knew that we had to look at the project with that in its mindset, and no one was talking about it.

00;21;44;24 - 00;22;04;08

Speaker 2

And it was it was knowing that you had to do something because there was a lot about climate crisis, a lot about the challenges. So when everyone talks about, the problem with embodied carbon and operational carbon, it's all to do with real estate. So that's 0.1. So you knew you had to start doing something. And we work incredibly hard now.

00;22;04;14 - 00;22;28;05

Speaker 2

But even then I was doing whole lifecycle carbon analysis on on how to get the best out to the project. I think the second thing is it's exactly the same as the first. I've got two young children. They're 16 of 14, and for years when they go to school, they're taught about the climate crisis. They talk about challenges, they talk about why they're flats and they they're given descriptions.

00;22;28;05 - 00;22;47;29

Speaker 2

And part of this link back to real estate. My daughters come home and talk to me about why are you

working in real estate? That's damaging the climate crisis. So, so, so for me, that was the second driver. And the third driver is I don't believe you can be sustainable unless you combine all three. So talk a little bit about that.

00:22:47;29 - 00:23:11;06

Speaker 2

But if you don't get this right you cannot be sustainable. So those are the three subjects and I've been looking at. Sustainability is the social part for many, many years. How do you help and support those that can't become sustainable. And what I mean by that is I think the statistic is 20% of buildings will be redeveloped at some point in the world.

00:23:11;06 - 00:23:35;16

Speaker 2

That leaves 80% of buildings that are not going to be energy efficient. So we need to work harder to help and support reducing that quantum as well. So I think sustainability is, I say this many times easy to say, sophisticated to do. If we get this right, we will be sophisticated in helping and supporting sustainability in the wider context.

00:23:35;16 - 00:23:44;22

Speaker 2

Not just about energy, not just about carbon, but how do you create an equitable and supportive, environment that's definitely going to be sustainable.

00:23:44;24 - 00:23:58;21

Speaker 1

And having gone on that journey is obvious now. But back then, was that a challenge in terms of pitching it to investors or occupiers or, other stakeholders, getting them involved in the journey and understanding that.

00:23:58;26 - 00:24:25;06

Speaker 2

At the beginning it wasn't selling to investors, it wasn't selling to occupiers. It was thinking about how we can create something better that also saved money. How do we think about it to get a betterment? And an example of that on a Verde project was outside Spice Terraces. So actually that's sustainable in its heart.

00:24:25;08 - 00:24:47;03

Speaker 2

And it also does create an opportunity in return, because in those days, terraces was the big mover of reducing, void and increasing, leasing. So actually it probably went back to investors. So whilst we spent a lot of time, we were looking at where and how we were spending money. So so it didn't increase the CapEx.

00:24:47;03 - 00:25:06;17

Speaker 2

We kept CapEx the same. But for example, we removed some glazing panels that we then sent away to be tested. These were all glazing panels that weren't fit for purpose in the new product. But we went away and tested them and in those tests, we proved that you didn't need to replace the glazing, you didn't replace the gaskets, you didn't.

00:25:06;19 - 00:25:30;29

Speaker 2

So actually, from a sustainability perspective, it allowed us to think of better ways of designing the new facade to last 50 years, 60 years, 70 years. So it was the start of that journey of spending embodied carbon. Well try and increase the embodied carbon for its longevity. And then thirdly, talk about the social, the

wellness, the outside air and those sort of third part.

00;25;31;00 - 00;25;46;09

Speaker 2

So that's how it all started thinking about how to create a better building. And then about ten years later, the returns were proven. And then the reason for being sustainable now is the right reason. The S is the bit that makes a difference.

00;25;46;11 - 00;26;04;11

Speaker 1

You, UK Head of Design and construction, between 2011 2009 before leaving to join Grafton Y. And how did that come about?

00;26;04;13 - 00;26;31;03

Speaker 2

It it was a moment in time where I had worked with aspire. And I was looking for that next opportunity. I actually one thing I didn't say earlier, I did a project in Madrid. I took the principles of what I did in London. I went to Madrid. And if you know Madrid, they like cars or use a lot of cars.

00;26;31;05 - 00;26;51;00

Speaker 2

They are not ahead in terms of whole lifecycle carbon. And I went to, Madrid to develop a building with the ethos of what we were doing in London to try and promote that. So that was my sort of opportunity. And it was it was hard work. It was a struggle. We created a great scheme. But it still had cars.

00;26;51;00 - 00;27;11;08

Speaker 2

So I knew that I needed to find that next opportunity to move it a step further. And at the same time, I was offered, an opportunity to go to Grafton Advisors, which had a scheme which is 195 Victoria Street. That's an island site. And this is what I said to the investors when I first met them.

00;27;11;10 - 00;27;36;15

Speaker 2

I cannot be given a more exciting opportunity. That is a square building with no party walls. It's in the heart of Victoria, and I have an opportunity to make something really special here. And that was the driver, one of the drive as well as all the other portfolio. When you look at that scheme, this is the next step for my career, the next step for me with my opportunity of creating something brand new in the heart of, of Victoria.

00;27;36;17 - 00;28;06;03

Speaker 1

And it was to get an opportunity to turn down. And so it was the the opportunity to work on that landmark project was the real driver that got you really excited about about going quick one from me, if you haven't already subscribed or followed this show on the podcast or app where you listen or watch, please do. It takes 10s and helps tremendously.

00;28;06;08 - 00;28;40;11

Speaker 1

I've got really big plans for people property plays podcast, and that one small action really, really helps grow the show and the present and enables us to keep doing what we do. So if you haven't already, please follow or like on the platform you watch or listen to. Thanks so much. So you joined the business, can you just talk to me about the evolution of that, that project, but also the other projects that you inherited?

00;28;40;13 - 00;28;44;28

Speaker 1

And yeah, the portfolio that you're, you're working on.

00;28;45;01 - 00;29;11;03

Speaker 2

So if I talk about just three different projects because they all have different meanings, I think the first one is one that we had, which was a building instant. James's. It was a grade two star listed building, a third of the buildings greatest asset, and the two thirds were refurbished. It needed its opportunity to be changed. It's quite hard to do whole lifecycle carbon analysis when you've got a grade two solid shipment.

00;29;11;05 - 00;29;33;17

Speaker 2

You've got to think about the way of making it more energy efficient in the two thirds to offset the bit that you can't do in the first set. So it meant that there was an accelerated opportunity to think about, well, let's think about opportunity to think about the market. Think about trying to be energy efficient. It's 120,000ft² in Saint James's, and about 10% of that was amenity.

00;29;33;17 - 00;29;54;17

Speaker 2

And we have outside space opportunity for people to, go out fresh air. And it really was a baby version of what I'm about to talk about with 115. It was not the test case because it was proving the market needed amenity. You need outside space, needed green Radiant wellness, all of those things are within 78 and generate.

00;29;54;17 - 00;30;20;18

Speaker 2

And then at the same time, we were delivering a scheme that was 450,000ft² of net, three quarters of 1,000,000ft² of gross of this island site. How do we create the best moved? So I talked about things you couldn't do the listed building. Well, now is the opportunity of natural ventilation really pushing the boundaries on on, embodied carbon, how to reduce it, how to maximize the reduction operation carbon greenery.

00;30;20;19 - 00;30;44;09

Speaker 2

How do you get greenery in all of those great things? So you sort of take one project and expand on it. And actually this scheme allows us to prove and cement the requirement for E and S in the leasing velocity and in terms of leasing return. So this project will will underwrite why we've been doing this work for the last 15 or 20 years.

00;30;44;11 - 00;31;04;22

Speaker 2

So that's the second project. Another one is one on one you Kevin D Street, where actually the role there was to change the entrance, the experience of how you arrived, it was so sort of security centric, i.e. there was a big security guard that said hello, but in a way that was a bit aggressive. And we changed that to a much more concierge.

00;31;04;22 - 00;31;28;10

Speaker 2

I'd worked hard in a lot of my projects to bring hotel experience into, receptions. And that happens to be actually on 78 and Jane Street. There's an individual, Henry, who I employed on a project who came from the hotel, world, and he was a security guard by job, but he invited and talked and gave that that opportunity.

00;31;28;10 - 00;31;56;27

Speaker 2

So we changed the ethos of what I want you, Cavendish Street, to be a much more gracious and opening and welcoming. And then we changed a few, few of the, the floors when they became vacant. And now it's a vibrant space. So you've had these huge projects, the sort of middle project, and then these little ones that we were working hard on how to change the product, how to change it into the ethos of what people want today, because we couldn't really do much with the outside.

00;31;56;29 - 00;32;13;03

Speaker 2

So those are just three. I mean, I can carry on talking about many others, but we we've looked at everything from small, medium and super large in the city, in Islington, in, Westminster. Those are sort of the patches we've been working on.

00;32;13;06 - 00;32;26;20

Speaker 1

Has Covid, accelerated a lot of the trends that you'd already identified by 5 to 10 years or so? And was that, was that an eye opening or, mindset shifting moment?

00;32;26;23 - 00;32;51;24

Speaker 2

Yeah. I mean, Covid and I've learned how to say this is that Covid is was a dreadful thing. But there are many, many positives that you can take out of something that is negative. And some of the things that we had already made decisions on, and that's about every single scheme we develop has natural ventilation, fresh air, being able to open up and experience natural ventilation, which actually goes back to 30 summary acts, which I'll talk about in a second.

00;32;51;24 - 00;33;09;27

Speaker 2

But we already made those decisions. But also it was about people not wanting to get into lifts, changing the way they were using. And now a lot of people will walk up a set of stairs to 3 or 4 stories as their their health kick in terms when they come to the office, they go up. So it's sort of almost promoted us.

00;33;09;27 - 00;33;29;21

Speaker 2

We were trying to put staircases that were available for reuse, sort of lifts, so it almost accelerated. It almost it pumped it up to something that we've been trying to push to actually use your own body to actually get a benefit in, in the, in the project. And, and we sort of taken those as opportunities to move forward.

00;33;29;21 - 00;33;56;27

Speaker 2

But if I take Goldman Sachs as a great example, we talked about flu when we first designed the building. Flu is a natural product of absenteeism within that organization. And we did a study that actually you don't want lots of handles on toilets, obviously, when you get into the toilet, but like a an airport, we thought about how do you create a chicane so you don't touch any doors when you go in until you physically go to the toilet?

00;33;56;29 - 00;34;18;07

Speaker 2

Whether or not that site flew, I don't know, but it definitely helped during Covid. It definitely helped to stop people touching things. So I think the pandemic has been a positive for learning and accelerating what we've been trying to achieve. And definitely without a doubt, we were asked lots of questions from occupiers. What have you done with ER?

00;34;18;10 - 00;34;38;11

Speaker 2

Have you stopped mixing? How do you stop people touching things? What's your automatic passing? So it changed the the mentality of occupiers to ask more questions. I would say now you don't get asked those questions. They have now fallen away and I think either that's because they expect it or to less. They've gotten one of the two.

00;34;38;18 - 00;35;01;27

Speaker 1

Yeah. Interesting. I in terms of the design led aspect of development, do you think that's shifted or that's changed, because of Covid over and above what you've just touched on in terms of the way that it looks and feels or, is that just as it was before Covid?

00;35;01;29 - 00;35;26;01

Speaker 2

I think there are parts where you get not. So if you're doing a presentation and you talk about natural ventilation, if you go to a presentation like 1 to 5 Victoria Street, where we've made all the air, the control as a tenant, you get lots of, oh, that's great. You know, that's really, really positive. But I think all the other things I was talking about, I'm not sure it has changed design because I think a lot of things that's already gone into the cycle, they're already absolutely done.

00;35;26;04 - 00;35;47;01

Speaker 2

So I'm not sure we are looking back. I mean, an example of where we have a conversation is we've created an algorithm. 105 Victoria Street View going into lists. And the algorithm is not particularly clever. But working with Schindler, we've come up with a thing called the green button. You press a green button on your phone as you go in.

00;35;47;03 - 00;36;08;24

Speaker 2

If you want to, you can press the green button for the list, and you can go slower in the list so that they equalize the energy. The energy going up is using energy. The energy of car coming down equalizes. It might take you 15 seconds longer to get to work, but you will not use any energy. So would we have done that without the pandemic?

00;36;08;24 - 00;36;32;21

Speaker 2

Probably. But we are trying to persuade people to use staircases that probably would, that 15 seconds would have worked. Now we're bringing it into technology that talks about how do you save time. It's, it's fascinating. It's the one thing I would say is this is a little analogy about natural ventilation. 30 summary. Acts is developed by a Swiss organization.

00;36;32;21 - 00;36;49;15

Speaker 2

And I remember going to Switzerland in Zurich and meeting the person responsible for the project. And he said he took us into his office and said, I want to give this to my staff in London. And we didn't really understand what that meant. He opened the window and said, fresh out, I want to be able to look at mountains.

00;36;49;17 - 00;37;11;12

Speaker 2

The reality is in London you want to look at mountains. But he wanted fresh air and we just try. But, you know, it was pollution. You know, it's windy, it's rainy, I don't care. I would like to get exactly the same to my employees in London as I do in, in Switzerland. So 30 similar acts became the first and actually ventilated building in in the city is probably one of the only ones being built.

00;37;11;14 - 00;37;31;25

Speaker 2

But that ethos is about a person. How do you create the best for that person to work? So now my design ethos is about how is that individual going to be best at work. So whether or not it's a pandemic or not, how do you allow that person when they come to work to be the most productive, to be the safest, to be the wealth, the wellness?

00;37;31;25 - 00;37;42;26

Speaker 2

It's whatever that right word is. In that environment that I think is the shift for me, it's about people, not about the cloaking of a building.

00;37;42;28 - 00;37;59;25

Speaker 1

Can you just talk to me a little bit about the fund? Besides, I did a little bit of it in terms of the intro. And you touched on kind of three of the assets as well. Can you just talk about, the different kind of return hurdles or profiles? And I want to say is an evergreen fund as well.

00;37;59;27 - 00;38;01;13

Speaker 1

Can you just expand on that further?

00;38;01;13 - 00;38;23;15

Speaker 2

So, so well put has been around, as you said, for over 20 years. It is it is a fund that now has been moved from an open ended fund to a closed fund. Which means that we we've got, existing assets. And as nine of them that are going through certain cycles, whether or not they are finished and they're a core asset or whether or not they're going through redevelopment.

00;38;23;15 - 00;38;48;13

Speaker 2

So actually, as a product, it's moved from being, just a core plus with a bit of value to more a value add to maximize the return to the investors over the next 4 or 5 years. So that's the principles behind it. And it's fair to say, with the market as we are, there's some challenges in values, but there's also some opportunities for us to take in the next 3 to 4 years.

00;38;48;13 - 00;39;00;21

Speaker 2

The good thing is, in all fund, we've got the assets and the assets are available for, redevelopment. So there's only a few that are in the core side. But we have opportunities for going forward.

00;39;00;23 - 00;39;08;21

Speaker 1

What are the challenges when you look at those different buckets, within the current context, of the environment that we are in right now.

00;39;08;23 - 00;39;38;28

Speaker 2

So one of the challenges is, policy in terms of the policy that's coming in about retrofit rebuild, not rebuild. That is a challenge in Westminster, 75%, a conservation area. It means that there's a small amount of buildings that are not in the conservation area that need to be worked hard to get return. I think the other thing that I would say is the, when you're looking at projects in the city, city is about driving additional assets.

00;39;38;28 - 00;40;05;09

Speaker 2

They want one point 2,000,000ft² of new space in the city, and therefore that's a real opportunity for us to push hard and hopefully get some, planning permissions to allow us to, to realize that. So it's sort of those are two opposites. The second thing is that the second thing is equity. If you're in a place today, we are probably is not at the bottom of the market.

00;40;05;11 - 00;40;38;24

Speaker 2

We are at a challenging time for debt. But I would say we're in a very positive time for equity raising because everyone will start to see that the opportunity is coming back, certainly in central London. And I won't talk about the rest of Europe, but in central London it's a real opportunity. And part of that. Just to conclude, the question is the there is very few projects being delivered in 2026, and we happen to be a very large proportion of that, hardly anything in 27, hardly anything in 28, nothing in 29.

00;40;38;27 - 00;40;49;14

Speaker 2

So if there's one time to acquire, to redevelop, to move forward is now, because ultimately those three years are the open opportunity for for projects that we have.

00;40;49;14 - 00;41;03;19

Speaker 1

So if you can develop and deliver schemes into those markets, you there's going to be a supply and demand imbalance. And so investors should developers should do very well just in terms of the sheer quantity of people looking for best in class space in central London.

00;41;03;24 - 00;41;28;25

Speaker 2

Yes. And I think you've touched on it there, which is important is best in class. It's about delivering the most sustainable, the most socially aware and also the best products. If you get those three together, you are delivering to the right answer for the right tenants. And there's a lot of people out there looking for opportunities. I think the stat is there's more 100,000 square foot floor height requirements in London than there has been before.

00;41;28;27 - 00;41;34;05

Speaker 2

That first quarter, hopefully a good second quarter, third quarter and fourth quarter.

00;41;34;07 - 00;41;54;09

Speaker 1

Can you just talk to me about 105 because you do something quite interesting, just in terms of everyone who works on, 105 in terms of a project, has to sign up to a charter. Can you just, elaborate and tell me a little bit more about the rationale behind that and what that charter is? And the project to.

00;41;54;12 - 00;42;15;00

Speaker 2

Okay. So I'll try and be succinct on this because I can talk for hours on this subject, but in essence, it is three things. The first thing is about teamwork. It is a is a model to create people, to collaborate. Every single person on the project, whether it's contractor or a consultant, has been interviewed as individuals. First. It's about creating people.

00;42;15;00 - 00;42;37;21

Speaker 2

So this is a team building activity. The second thing is relating to supporting the local community. So we spend so much time talking about developing buildings. We do lots of research for planning. We all talk about the what's right and what's wrong and how we can influence it. Well, why don't we take that step further and actually carry that out beyond planning during construction and beyond?

00:42:37;21 - 00:43:01;14

Speaker 2

So it means that we're supporting the local community, whether that's charities, whether that's schools. That's the key to it's you're linking people with the place they're developing and the schools and the individuals that will benefit from. And the third one, which is probably the most important, is that we're creating a legacy for the building, the legacy is saying that we are doing all this work for the next.

00:43:01;15 - 00:43:32;21

Speaker 2

I've done it for five years, probably finishing in another two and a half years. So seven years work finding the right partners, a charity, partners that then the one person that comes in is the occupy the occupier steps into that role and in perpetuity is supporting the local community. So we're offering someone not only an energy efficient building, a fantastic product, but it's a set up social strategy that goes from team building with my people to the contracting organization to the next round of people, which are the occupiers.

00:43:32;21 - 00:44:01;26

Speaker 2

And if the occupiers come in, they think about the people. They know that they're supporting the local school. They know they can go to the community center to help with the Tea party or go to the local green area. It's sort of it's almost wrapping it into this way. Go back to what I was saying. Ian's right. He becomes easy and you become a group that create this product that is for the future, not just solely thinking about the next ten years.

00:44:02;03 - 00:44:09;10

Speaker 1

Can you talk to me about the G with ESG? Because he's talking a lot about the Ian. Yes, the G hasn't quite had as much air to it.

00:44:09;13 - 00:44:30;24

Speaker 2

It doesn't because it's given right. It's governance is about creating that thing that you should be doing. We should be doing is we shouldn't even have an acronym ESG. In my opinion, G is something that we have to follow. We have to be right. We have to, correct everything in terms of governance. So I don't ever talk about G because I say it's given.

00:44:30;24 - 00:44:33;06

Speaker 2

It's something that we have to do.

00:44:33;08 - 00:44:45;27

Speaker 1

As part of your role. And I touched on it earlier, your title is Development director, but really your role is so much more than that. Can you just talk to me about the different facets and different parts of your role too?

00:44:46;00 - 00:45:10;17

Speaker 2

Yeah, I so the last six months I've had an opportunity to be much more responsible with the overall fund. And it means that not only am I doing the development side, I'm also doing, elements that relate to investor management, the asset management, the general running of the buildings, going to talk to investors, future investors thinking about co investing.

00:45:10;20 - 00:45:38;09

Speaker 2

So it's a bigger role. And it is an opportunity to do that next step. So we talked about steps starting with the shares and slowly being given opportunities. I was given this opportunity by BDO to step up into a bit more of a wider role because someone had left the firm and I've taken it, grabbed it, relished it, and spent a lot of hours thinking about it, working on it.

00;45;38;09 - 00;46;07;17

Speaker 2

And that is the future for me, is the next phase of now creating a new fund, a new opportunity, raising some more equity to actually do all the things I've been doing for the last 30 years, but actually do it with those investors with, the new debt providers, as almost a club of people with my experience to work with them to deliver the right answer to respond to E, to respond to S, that that mission is set and that mission is important.

00;46;07;23 - 00;46;34;28

Speaker 1

So take all that experience, all those learnings, all the buildings that you've delivered, the team and the people that you've worked with, and then take advantage of the opportunity set that is, in front of us. It seems like lots of people are raising capital to be central London. Office focus. Can you just talk to me about where you see the opportunities over and above, maybe what we've spoken about and what are the key things that you'll be looking for in terms of the assets that you'll be going after?

00;46;35;00 - 00;46;55;22

Speaker 2

Well, I think the first thing is in terms of raising capital, we are going to have some fantastic case studies of certainly last five years, and I can report not longer about the case studies, but case studies about why we do a, why we do s, why we push hard on product, why we change and look for those new opportunities, why we're doing whole life cycle carbon.

00;46;55;22 - 00;47;17;29

Speaker 2

I think that as a package is quite unique in the market, especially when I will be the person selling it, and it's incredibly important. And I have a team behind me that I've also been part of that journey. Who would be front and center with me delivering that message that we can achieve? I think the second part about what we're chasing, we're chasing those opportunities.

00;47;18;01 - 00;47;44;28

Speaker 2

That means that we can create that change, that way of giving a strong, sustainable answer through the treacle like versions of the policies on planning, which is incredibly difficult over the last 30 years. You can see the changes, but just think about that way. We can take a product that is in great, be great, see and deliver it as a pass, the super prime of offices.

00;47;44;28 - 00;48;04;07

Speaker 2

And I think that's probably where our our nieces and having done all those different types of projects I've talked about in five years, we've got every single thing from a tiny adjustment all the way up to the new bills that will be out there, selling. But with the team that have actually done all of those projects over the last five years.

00;48;04;07 - 00;48;15;15

Speaker 2

So I think that's where our benefit is, where our opportunity is. And then obviously, we'll be persuading a number of our investors that have worked with me over the over the years to be a part of that journey.

00:48;15;15 - 00:48;44;09

Speaker 1

Next, someone listening to this who's early on in their journey, what advice from a career perspective would you give them, bearing in mind you've been able to reinvent, pivot, shift, set up your own business? Yeah. Work as a developer. Welcome. In a private equity type environment, what advice would you give them? If they can relate, to being wildly ambitious and driven?

00:48;44;11 - 00:48;49;16

Speaker 1

And want to have a little bit of the success that you've had, what advice would you give someone like that?

00:48;49;18 - 00:49;11;02

Speaker 2

I think hard work is without a shadow of a doubt. And drive are two really important words where you look at the opportunity and if someone says that you need to do number one, you need to do one, number two, number three, number four, number five, you need to think about how can you do something more often, do more.

00:49;11;02 - 00:49;33;10

Speaker 2

Ask for people to support you still do one well, but the two, three, four and five is going to give you that opportunity to expand. And as effectively what I've done, I will also go back to having someone that's a mentor and in my job, my future role, and it has been for a few years, is to find opportunities to help and support people and listen and give advice.

00:49;33;12 - 00:49;52;15

Speaker 2

Be the sounding block. So that's my job going forward. But it is definitely about grabs. Move forward, think, try and look at the better place and see those avenues. Talk to people, be confident. All those types of things is is how I sit.

00:49;52;18 - 00:49;59;01

Speaker 1

Can you just talk about flipping flipping the script when it comes to designing these buildings?

00:49;59;04 - 00:50;25;24

Speaker 2

Yeah, I mean, if I use one, I for my Victory Street as the example, we have a straight line called Find Alternative. And the principle behind that is delivering the best product in different ways, looking at different, different opportunities. And the design one was normally the architect is lead is king and the sustainability consultant I've been talked a lot about a is in the side, never really heard pushed away.

00:50;25;26 - 00:51;08;28

Speaker 2

What we did is we changed that. We actually made the sustainability consultant, the lead consultant, and each of the architects, the engineers, all had a person on the sustainability group, and I wouldn't review a piece of design unless it had been something like group. So I knew what the embodied carbon was, what the opportunity for operational. So it meant that we actually created the ethos and the principles around truly holistic carbon, rather than it being just a purpose to get planning permission and actually, the one point I would say is that we have just completed stage four and we've done a whole lifecycle analysis we plan on doing at the end, and we're also

00:51;08;28 - 00:51;16;15

Speaker 2

sharing all this information with with the public. So it's incredibly important. So that's the final alternative bit.

00;51;16;17 - 00;51;25;15

Speaker 1

Can you talk about the social strategy as well. And where that kind of interlinked with commuting and accessing the buildings to.

00;51;25;18 - 00;51;49;14

Speaker 2

Yeah, I think, I mean, we talked about very earlier, which was I think the first, bike ramp that went through a reception. So that was sort of set, set the scene of what I'm trying to do. And that removes car parking. So remove car parking, cycling as an important part. Most times cyclists go in the loading bay, the back door and I cycle five days a week to work is my commute.

00;51;49;14 - 00;52;14;26

Speaker 2

It's nothing special, but that's what I do. So therefore, why shouldn't I have the same experience as an individual working in a suit or a pair of trainers into work? So therefore 115 Victoria Street. Not only is creating this, experience that is second to none. And when the images come out and you'll see these is a triple height space with a circular ramp that really celebrates about sustainable travel.

00;52;14;29 - 00;52;34;08

Speaker 2

It means that when you cycling, you have a very, very important path into the building. And secondly, you go past the activity zone, which has a gym and it has the, the, the area for bikes, but it also says it's got extra lockers for people that walk to work. They want to change their trainers into their shoes for people that run.

00;52;34;08 - 00;52;58;10

Speaker 2

So it's really, really, really important that there is not a front and back entrance in 105. It's all about the single, entrance for anyone who's doing anything. And the link to and social strategy is we did a, a cycle ride down to Brighton. It's 105km for 105, Victoria Street. It has about 105 people doing it.

00;52;58;12 - 00;53;18;25

Speaker 2

And it's about raising money for local community. And we we did a ride that was last, last Friday, which was the second one. The first one went to Windsor. So we've gone south to Brighton, we've gone, west to Windsor, and we've got north and east to go. So we've got two years before we complete the building.

00;53;18;29 - 00;53;40;14

Speaker 2

And this is the link back to the, the, the, the design will probably go, let's say East next time. And that will be going out from 1 to 5. Out east we have another event will raise money. It'll be great. The social partners join us. And then the fourth one, which is in 2026, is going to go, let's say from the north down to one at five, we're going to do 1 to 5.

00;53;40;20 - 00;53;57;00

Speaker 2

All the sites are going to go down the ramp. They're all going to park their bikes up, and we'll have a little party in the village square. So it goes back to team building. It's raising money. It's something that I love. And surprisingly, there's another 100 people that like cycling. So it's a great opportunity of doing all of those things.

00;53;57;07 - 00;54;21;26

Speaker 2

The last thing I would say about that, we had the head of social strategy of Westminster there. We had charity partners from the Abbey center, Wandering Minds, minds, Westminster Wills. We had schools, we had a headmaster of a school turning up. So we've actually got connection with not only the people that do work, but that embodied part where the social strategy is working because we're having our charity partners working with us.

00;54;22;02 - 00;54;32;01

Speaker 2

So it's super exciting to have this, and I look forward to the next one. 105 K in May. East or north? That's a debate.

00;54;32;03 - 00;54;54;20

Speaker 1

I think you'd probably get much more uptake. The fact it's a cycle. So I know you're into, cold water swimming. If you ask people to do a 105 kilometer cold walk, a cold water swim, I don't think that would, you get quite as much interest, but it sounds, absolutely phenomenal. Well, a question that I ask everyone who comes on the podcast is we let's draw this to a close is if I gave you 500 million pounds worth of capital, who are the people?

00;54;54;20 - 00;55;00;10

Speaker 1

What property? In which place would you look to deploy? That capital.

00;55;00;12 - 00;55;32;05

Speaker 2

So let's talk about 400 million of that. I would look at opportunities to make carbon reduction as part of a process to sell to others, to help them deliver on low embodied carbon. But you mentioned about open water swimming. It's incredibly important for me to think about buying some lakes. Maybe it's an algae farm, but also I've had a number of, races canceled because of the river.

00;55;32;05 - 00;56;06;01

Speaker 2

And a lot of people are hearing about rivers. I would like to come up with some plan that allows me to create a beautiful river. Five K not 100 and 5K5 chaos swimming for everyone to use. It's absolutely crystal clean. That also has some way of connecting to saving energy. I don't know what the answer is, but that's where my 400 million would go, and the last 100 million would invest in central London offices where I know how to make, a good return and continue rolling that up to spend more money to offset the hassles that we have in our rivers and our lakes and everything else.

00;56;06;01 - 00;56;09;01

Speaker 1

We have a little publication of your buildings. Who know.

00;56;09;01 - 00;56;10;23

Speaker 2

Potentially potential.

00;56;10;25 - 00;56;21;27

Speaker 1

And in terms of people we've touched on property in place, is there anyone that you've worked with during your career that you would grab and bring them along as part of the journey? And he mentors, or.

00;56;22;00 - 00;56;48;06

Speaker 2

So I've mentioned, the individual on numerous occasions, that this, this, this guy was, one kind of distressed construction director. So he was responsible for the original Canary Wharf. From a delivery perspective, he is without a doubt an absolute influence on my career and absolute support. And he's and I say he's still someone that I ask questions to.

00:56:48;08 - 00:57:13;03

Speaker 2

I still talk to him. We are still friends. And I started in 1997 when I met him. So it's quite a long, long period. His name is Richard and he's a mate and he's a good friend, and he's a good friend of my family and my and my children. So I'm not gonna say any more than that, but he is no question the influence and support other than my family.

00:57:13;03 - 00:57:19;05

Speaker 2

But as an individual that's not family related, that has made a huge difference to my life.

00:57:19;07 - 00:57:29;04

Speaker 1

How someone listening to this is early on in the journey. How how do you think they should go about looking at getting a mentor, and what are the kind of things that they should look for and how should they approach it?

00:57:29;07 - 00:57:51;15

Speaker 2

Well, I mean, I think I already said in the in the interview here that, you know, part of my role is to do exactly that. There are lots of people my age, that are willing and want to support young. In fact, I have a call after this where someone has reached out from Canada that reached out and asked me a question about coming to London.

00:57:51;17 - 00:58:10;23

Speaker 2

I said, of course I'll speak to them. I've got a half an hour call. I'm not saying I'll be able to do that with everybody, but if someone gets the energy to go and find looks in the market, you will find individuals that want to help you. There's no question there are a lot of people that want to see the market growing, new opportunities, new people.

00:58:10;26 - 00:58:37;09

Speaker 1

So sage advice and you're absolutely right. There's a lot of people who've come on this podcast as well whose inboxes get flooded. Post podcast with people looking, to, to grab a couple of minutes of their time just to ask a couple of questions. And it's great that you're open to doing so as well. Well, look, you in the team, are doing some phenomenal work, and it's really exciting to see what, you're going to be doing, over the next five, ten years, taking advantage of the opportunity set in front of us.

00:58:37;09 - 00:58:42;28

Speaker 1

Thank you so much for being so generous with your time and some of the learnings. Like I said, excited to see where you go today.

00:58:43;01 - 00:58:43;22

Speaker 2

Thank you very much.

00:58:43;24 - 00:59:08;23

Speaker 1

And good thanks for listening to this week's episode people property Place podcast. If you found it insightful, feel free to share it with a friend or colleague. Give us a rating, light or comment it helps tremendously. It'd be great to hear from you on LinkedIn. I'm super open minded to recommendations of guests we should have on the show or areas of the market we should explore further.

00;59;08;23 - 00;59;39;04

Speaker 1

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00;59;39;07 - 00;59;42;15

Speaker 1

Have a great day wherever you are and I look forward. Catch you next time.