

CAROLINE TAKLA

Boutique property-buying consultancy The Collection LLP was founded in 2010 by Caroline Takla. The company, which is based on Brook Street, sources the most desirable properties that never make it to the open market, overseeing the entire buying process for clients from start to finish.

Caroline cut her teeth as a trainee negotiator for Townends estate agent in 2002, and was promoted to sales manager within 18 months. Next she took a job at Hamptons' new office in Paddington, where her language skills – she is fluent in Arabic – proved invaluable.

When Hamptons was bought by Dubai-based property company Emaar, she moved to north Africa to expand the group's property portfolio Tangiers and Rabat. She later returned to London, taking a job in Chestertons' Hyde Park office, and then joined Black Brick to set up its new Middle East desk.

In 2009 she decided the time was right to go it alone, and set up a buying agency. "Selling agents had had it good for so long, but I could see that the market was turning towards the buyer," she says. "The dollar was very strong against the pound, and with all my clients being based in the Middle East, they were all dollar-based."



Ironically Caroline's first ever client didn't actually hail from the Middle East, but from Russia. The company secured her a property on Park Street in Mayfair, and business soon spread through word of mouth. Today The Collection LLP has six staff, who are fluent in Arabic, Russian, Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati.

"The business model is very much like that of a private bank," says Caroline. "It's a discreet service, where clients can deal with somebody who speaks their language and can offer them a friendly service. Ultimately the aim is that clients view us as an extension of their own family here in London."

Staff spend about 70 per cent of their time outside the office, viewing properties and meeting clients and contacts. "The beauty of Mayfair is that you are working in London's most iconic district," says Caroline. "It's recognisable throughout the world, but it feels like a village. There's a real sense of community here."

Communications, specialising in fashion, cosmetics and consumer goods. Prior to joining Harrods Estates, she worked for Berkeley Homes for four years as sales manager at its 250-unit flagship development Harrods Village in south-west London.

Speaking on what property buyers find so appealing about Mayfair, Shirley says: "Mayfair has so much to offer and is the home to some of London's finest shops, restaurants and hotels, making it a highly desirable location for both UK and overseas investors.

"It's an exciting time for Mayfair; the area is fast becoming the new super-prime hotspot in London. With an array of new developments currently under construction, the quality of luxury property in Mayfair will exceed expectations and price per square foot values."

"I love the history and the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Mayfair, and am always so impressed at the way every house in Mayfair comes with its own character, interesting history and unique appeal"