



NETWORKING AND SUPPORT FORUM FOR LGBT PROFESSIONALS IN REAL ESTATE

NEWS RELEASE

Happy 5th Birthday to Freehold !

Freehold, the network group supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) real estate professionals working in the real estate industry celebrates its 5th birthday on Thursday 29th September. Freehold was formed by co-founders, Saleem Fazal (Real Estate Partner at Taylor Wessing) and David Mann (Partner at Tuffin Ferraby Taylor, Building Consultants) with the intent to raise the profile of the LGBT community in property, provide a support network and change attitudes to make the industry more diverse and welcoming.

The Freehold Board includes Saleem Fazal and David Mann as well as Brian Bickell (Chief Executive, Shaftesbury plc), Brie Stevens-Hoare QC (Hardwicke Chambers), Chris Edwards (CSR & Diversity Manager, Travers Smith) & Ollie Saunders (Director, JLL).

Freehold events have been hosted by major players in the real estate industry including the Crown Estate, British Land, Lendlease, Cluttons, CBRE, JLL, Savills and many others. Freehold has also supported charities such as Stonewall & LandAid.

Saleem Fazal said: *"The Freehold Board would like to thank all its hosts and members for their continued support and helping bring real change to our industry by encouraging everyone to pursue acceptance and feel that they are able to be themselves at work every day."*

David Mann added: *"We were lucky with our timing and the real estate sector's awakening to the need for change. We could not have achieved anything without our fantastic members and the support we have been given by our professional institutions, property press and employers, especially those who have hosted Freehold events."*

In its five years of existence, Freehold has attracted nearly 1000 members and has been the catalyst for other internal corporate and regional networks setting up.

Alison Nimmo, Chief Executive of The Crown Estate said: *"Freehold's impact over the last few years has been invaluable – from supporting the LGBT community, to raising awareness and galvanising change by promoting wider diversity and inclusion within the real estate sector. We look forward to continuing our work with Freehold to create a modern and progressive industry that attracts and welcomes the best talent from all backgrounds."*

Amanda Clack, President RICS, added: *"It is so fundamental that everyone feels able to bring themselves to work every day and is able to be themselves. This is increasingly more critical given the importance of tackling the War for Talent."*

Guy Grainger, CEO of JLL EMEA, also added: *"It is amazing to think that Freehold has only been in existence for 5 years because their impact has been so positive in that time. I can honestly say that the property industry is a better place for our LGBT community and Freehold is a brilliant forum to connect people, highlight any challenges we still face with bias and promote modernisation of the property industry."*

For media enquiries and to speak to Saleem/David, please contact Sofia Nogues S.Nogues@taylorwessing.com