



STAN'S QUARANTINE DIARY

STAN FRENCH - SENIOR ASSOCIATE

Age - 55

Place of birth - Northampton

Worked in the team at Campbells - since 2007

Currently lives in - Little Irchester



Having always been an associate at Campbells my role in the team varies from day to day, it can be photography one day, viewings and valuations the next and sometimes a day can be taken up by sales chasing.

But I think, my main role is to communicate with my clients from valuation to key turn, and hopefully beyond, and make the journey as smooth as possible.

How are you dealing with being confined to your home?

Well, I was already living alone so I don't have any problems with the solitude, and I am lucky that I live on the edge of Northamptonshire, close to a country park and the river Nene so I am able to get my daily exercise whether that is a run, a bike ride or just a nice long walk in the countryside.

I am also fortunate to have a large supermarket within walking distance so shopping has not been a problem either.

I am able to work remotely from my home (this is something we have always been able to do at Campbells) which is good as it allows us to keep in contact with our clients and reassure them that things will carry on as close to normal as we can.

I have not heard a single bad word when contacting everyone, they are happy to receive the information and be contacted.



I also keep regular contact with my work colleagues and my family through Zoom meetings, which is great as some members of my family live overseas, this does make you realise that it really is a worldwide problem.

Oddly, I am enjoying being at home!

Obviously it is not a good situation we find ourselves in and the sooner we can get back to normal (whatever that will be) the better, but I am enjoying the pace of life and I find the community spirit is reassuring.

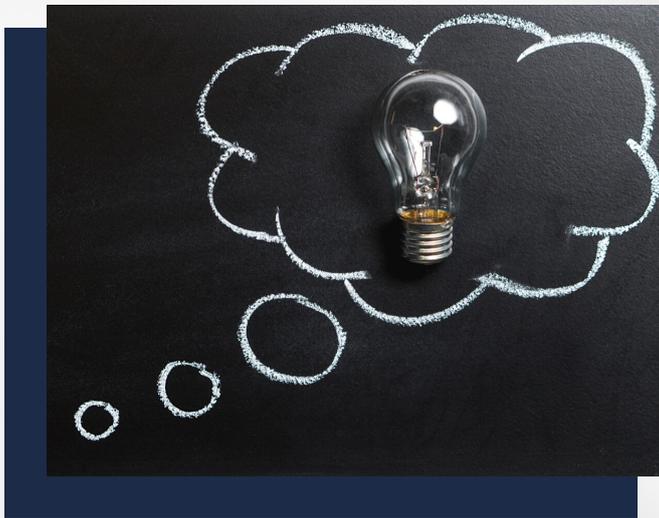
I would have to say that it has been very frustrating not being able to help my clients complete their transactions when they were so close to completing, and hearing the frustration in their voices, although most people have come to terms with the fact that their house sale or purchase will still happen, just not now.

And having no excuses to avoid getting done the jobs at home that I really don't want to do!

One of my biggest worry was my family, my mother is a fit 86 years old and I have another member of the family with underlying health problems so I have been worried about them. My daughter and one of my brothers work in the construction industry, and they did seem to be the last to go into lockdown so I did have some concerns for them as well.

I am happy to report that are all well. Thankfully none of us have been affected by COVID-19.





I guess I have learnt or should I say reaffirmed that I can be very self-reliant and I don't mind my own company, also I am a very calm person, don't get me wrong I have my moments, but in general I just get on with things and find a way to cope.

And, I can still ride a bike!

My eating habits haven't really changed, I have always enjoyed good food and preparing it, so it's great to have the time to try new recipes and dig out the old classics.

The only bad thing I have been doing is drinking more than usual, but again I like wine with food so I guess this was bound to happen, hic!

When it comes to exercising, I am a very keen golfer so I am really missing not getting out with my friends and playing a round or two, but I have been running, walking or bike riding most days.

There are quite a few things that I have been appreciating, it's been great to have the Campbells team and my family and friends to chat with.



We have regular team Zoom meetings at Campbells, which is very helpful as if there are any problems or new ideas we can all talk them through, and it is very good for keeping spirits up.

The family is always important to me so it is good to see them via Zoom as well and make sure they are all well.

And of course, a good circle of friends to mess about with on various social media sites.

There is always someone at the end of the phone if I want a chat, this works both ways.



What have been your most challenging moments? Mental and physical...

I did go for a bike ride around the local villages one Sunday, the sun was out and the roads were empty, it was like being a kid again. I then rode past what I later found out to be a temporary morgue to cope with the extra bodies that we have due to COVID-19, that was a shock and brought things home with a thump !

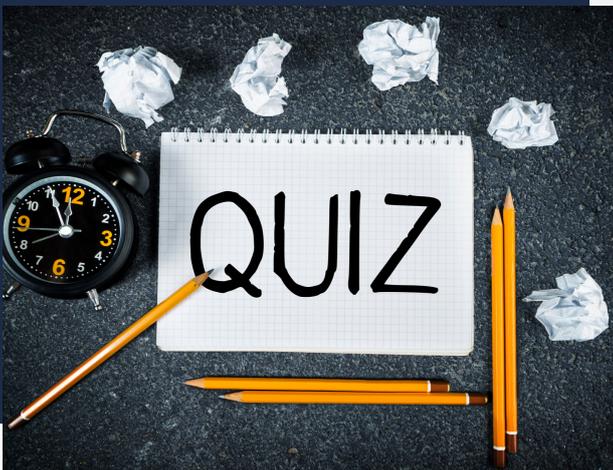
On the other side, I am using this time for learning as well. I hope to finish the NAEA Level 3, it's something that I always wanted to do but never had enough time.

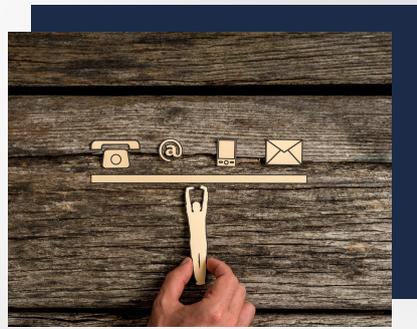
Also, I have learnt a few new computer skills.

I think it is important to help the people around you, so I have been doing my mum's shopping for her on a weekly basis, and just generally telling friends, family and neighbours that if they need anything they can just give me a shout.

I think it is fair to say that some of the things we are doing now would've been considered as absolutely crazy a year ago, but it all seems to be normal now. Two quizzes a week with my entire family including the ones overseas and doing valuations via internet with vendors going around their home with the phone.

I also can now chip a golf ball from my lounge over the sofa through the dining room and hit a bucket of paint by the patio doors that I have not opened yet.





What do you think will change after COVID-19?

I hear a lot of people saying how grateful they are for their family and friends and will not take things for granted ever again, travel more, stop and smell the roses that kind of thing, which is really good to hear.

I don't want to sound cynical but I fear that after while people (including myself) will just fall back into the same old ways – I hope everyone proves me wrong!

What have you been doing in the background to help existing clients with their concerns?

It has mainly been communicating with solicitors to make sure everything is as far along as it can possible be, and relating this to the buyers and vendors of ongoing transactions.

Talking to my vendors who are on the market but not sold, and just letting them know that there is still plenty of activity going on via internet portals and platforms, and that we are still getting requests to view their properties.

Same as always, it's about communication and in the present climate people really appreciate that we are still here for them.

What am I looking forward to the most after lockdown?

- ✓ Hugging my daughter.
- ✓ A game of golf and a beer with my mates.
- ✓ Getting back to work and getting on with life.

How will you be helping your clients after we are released from the lockdown?

Again, I feel the key will be communication and keeping them up-to-date with everything related to the market conditions, and reassuring them that, regardless of how the market reacts after the lock down, we will as always be working for their best interest.

I'm not exactly sure about how this will affect the market, but it will definitely have an effect, and what we will do at Campbells is make sure that we are in the best possible position to respond in the best way when these positive or negative changes take place.

I don't think it will be as terrible as the media present it, we may even have a mini boost in the short term as people who need to move have not been able to, the market always ebbs and flows, but people need to move for various reasons and this will always be the case. In the long term, I feel like things will slow down but hopefully not for too long.



*family quiz night

Overall, just take care of yourself and the people you love.