

The Creed v. Greed style of developing a good agency

CHRISTIAN beliefs, integrity, honesty, straight dealings, property development and estate agency — an impossible mix?

Not, so say young professionals, Paul Deriaz and Paul Mitson, who are basing their new commercial property business on their shared creed.

They are also basing it on their combined and varied experience of course.



Deriaz is a chartered town planner who has notched up time in local government (five years at Runnymede covering the area now neatly quartered by the M25 and the M3) and with a Bourne End property developer.

Mitson has always been in commercial property work, specialises in acquisitions, disposals, valuations and rent reviews, and as part of a long-term plan to set up in business for himself, spent a year opening up a Thames Valley office for a West End practice.

But it was through their religion that they met. Both are members of the 200-strong River Christian Fellowship which meets at Altwood School in Maidenhead.

And it is upon their strong foundation in Christianity that they hope to build their company.



Says Mitson: "Because our beliefs are important to us, we thought it would be good to set up a business together and witness in the area.

"Business can be straight and honest and we've had a very good response so far to our approach. People like it."

Both are local men, Deriaz



In a world where conversion doesn't only mean houses into flats, estate agents Paul Deriaz (left) and Paul Mitson place as much stress on honesty as profit.

having lived all his life in Maidenhead and Cookham Dean, and Mitson originally from Maidenhead and now in Wooburn.

But they chose to site their new venture in Marlow's Spittal St because it is central to their existing client base.

Adds Deriaz: "We were also attracted here because Marlow's a town that's beginning to broaden its shoulders a little.

"The Globe Park development has been such a success that people now know where Marlow is — and that, combined with its superb position in relation to Heat-

hrow, good road networks and superb residential qualities, make it a very good place to be."

Deriaz and Mitson say they are the sole commercial agents in Marlow and they are hoping their slightly unusual combination of backgrounds will make them a good all-round agency for local business.

Says Mitson: "I come across sites and Paul has the planning knowledge to be able to say whether permission is likely to be granted on them or not which is very useful indeed. Our two areas of expertise com-

plement each other."

As a town planner, Deriaz has a healthy respect for the Green Belt principle, something which he believes is going to protect Marlow and environs from the worst kind of sprawling commercial development.



The golf courses and good restaurants will, he says, continue to attract the managing directors attention and a good spread of residential property from terraced houses to £4m. homes will provide them with a full range of local staff.

"It's always a question of balance. The residents already here are naturally fearful of too much growth and there are various others who would say there's not enough going on.

"But I think the Green Belt will restrain and contain growth at a reasonable level," says Deriaz.



Meantime the pair, who opened officially for business on September 2, are hoping their consistently straight approach will pay off in an area of commerce which has attracted a fair share of opprobrium for sharp practice over the years.

"I actually don't think there's any more dishonesty in property than any other area of business where competition is involved," says Mitson.

"But with property," adds Deriaz, "and in any area where you've got the client relationship, if you have integrity and you're professional about it people will come back to you.

"If you're dishonest you might make a quick deal but no one will come back. We aim to be in business for decades rather than months."