



**PARAGON MORTGAGES PRESS RELEASE
04 FEBRUARY 2014**

INTERMEDIARIES REPORT BOOST IN MORTGAGE SALES

The average number of mortgages being introduced by intermediaries to lenders was up by 7% in Q4 2013, in comparison with Q3 according to the latest research from buy-to-let specialist Paragon Mortgages.

According to their panel of intermediaries, the average number of all mortgages introduced in Q4 2013 (20.8) was 15% higher than Q4 2012 (18.1). This shows a sharp increase in the level of mortgage involvement from intermediaries over the past year, and follows a steady annual increase in the average number of mortgage cases dealt with since 2010.

Such trends are a positive development for the mortgage market, following a significant decrease in volumes of mortgage business in 2007 and 2008 as a result of the credit crunch.

Moving forward into 2014 there is optimism among intermediaries about future levels of mortgage business, in particular buy-to-let. Over 50% of intermediaries expect to do more buy-to-let mortgage business over the next 12 months and, more specifically, this is expected to increase by just over 5% in Q1.

Intermediaries' perception of the availability of buy-to-let finance has also become increasingly positive. In Q4 2013, 56% of intermediaries said availability of buy-to-let finance had improved. This is a significant increase in optimism compared with Q4 2012 when 47% of intermediaries thought finance was available.

John Heron, Managing Director of Paragon Mortgages, said: "The real acid test of any recovery is the volume of transactions. The market has been very dull for a very long time but evidence is now stacking up of a major shift in gear.

"Intermediaries are writing more mortgage business and are confident about writing more again in the near future. But it is important to keep these improved levels of activity in perspective. Although the volume of mortgage business is increasing for many intermediaries, levels are still lower than they were pre-2008. There is a long way to go therefore before we have a market that we could regard as 'normal'."

ENDS

For further information contact:

Victoria Lisowski

Corporate Communications Account Manager

Tel: 0121 712 2563

NOTES TO EDITORS

Paragon Mortgages is a leading specialist provider of buy-to-let mortgages and is part of The Paragon Group of Companies, a FTSE 250 company. Paragon's product range caters for both professional and private investor landlords.

Paragon Mortgages introduced its first product aimed at the professional property investor in 1995 and is a member of the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML), the Intermediary Mortgage Lenders Association (IMLA), National Landlords Association (NLA) and the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA) Lenders' Panel.