

COMING SOON!
**More Coach Houses to
be released between
Christmas and New
Year. Keep an eye on the
website and Rightmove
for details.**

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2017



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Phase 1B Launch – a resounding success!

Eager self-builders have snapped up 40 per cent of the first plots which were released for sale as part of Phase 1B.

At a launch event earlier this month, the first 24 plots were unveiled to the market, with customers excitedly handing over cheques on the day to reserve their preferred location. Those who did, not only got the first pick of the plots, but also had their Stamp Duty paid by Graven Hill.

More than 200 people registered for the event to learn more about the remaining plots at Phase 1A, the new plots at Phase 1B and to receive advice from industry experts about undertaking their self-build journey.

Find out more about the event and future opportunities to buy at Graven Hill inside this month's edition.

The year that dreams came true...

It's been a productive year in 2017 in terms of putting the infrastructure in place, selling plots and preparing for 2018 when the community will begin to take shape as people move into their dream home at Graven Hill.

It's been a journey not only for us, but our customers. For the team at Graven Hill we moved into the Plot Shop in central Bicester while for our customers, they underwent a transition from imagining their dream home, to the reality of being able to achieve it.

For some, that transition only happened recently at the launch of Phase 1B where we saw an excited flurry of customers eager to reserve their pick of the plots. In addition, they also had the chance to speak with industry experts including TV presenter and architectural designer, Charlie Luxton, who you will read more from on the next page.

Charlie touched upon various key points of the self-build journey but all were underpinned by two key messages; **"keep it simple"** and **"do less better"**. By keeping it simple you will remain in control of your budget, make the construction programme easier to manage and ease the pressure on your self-build journey. Charlie had lots of tips for doing less better – see page three.



At the event we welcomed people from all walks of life; those looking for an affordable way to start out on the housing ladder, those wanting to build their dream home and those nearing retirement planning to downsize.

The varied demographic reflects our vision for Graven Hill, which is to create an inclusive community for everyone. And by keeping it simple, everyone can be included in that vision.

As we near the end of the year, and you are making that wishlist to Santa, why not add your dream home to your list and consider the opportunities available at Graven Hill in 2018.

“At previous events, demand was so high we had people queuing with their cheque books to reserve a plot.”



Phase 1B

www.gravenhill.co.uk



Charlie keeps it simple

He has years of self-build knowledge and experience but at the launch of Phase 1B, TV presenter and architectural designer Charlie Luxton had one key message for customers; **keep it simple.**

Presenting to a packed audience, Charlie said one of the biggest pitfalls self-builders come across is overcomplicating the process by getting carried away.

“In order to keep the process reasonable straightforward, people need a simple concept that is robust,” he said.

“Keeping it simple is all about how it is better to do less and do it well than do more and do it badly. Just because your plot passport states you can have up to 180 square metres doesn't mean you have to. Often people get carried away and try and build to the maximum which then means they have to make massive compromises going forward on the space they do create.”

For Charlie, a realistic budget, prioritising the structure and a reputable, quality design and construction team are the key ingredients to a successful self-build journey. Investing in a quality architect and quantity

surveyor will be an investment in the quality of the building so is worth researching through local word of mouth and recommendations.

“Budget is the biggest concern; don't try to do too much with too little money. People often get sucked into complicated or over the top technology and ignore the fundamental issues which are fabric and design,” he said.

He stressed that the priority should be to deliver a quality structure and exterior as these features will not change and if done correctly, could last a lifetime. Internal fixtures and fittings, which will have a shorter lifespan and can be upgraded at a later date, should come second to the building itself.

“You need to prioritise the things you won't change such as the exterior as this will undergo the most weathering and you could get through three or four kitchens in the lifetime of just one roof.”

Charlie's final piece of advice was that people should not underestimate the work involved – particularly if they are balancing their build with a job of their own – and should always have a contingency fund.

“Keeping it simple is all about how it is better to do less and do it well than do more and do it badly.”



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“I would always recommend a contingency fund of between five and 10 per cent,” he said.

“But the great thing about Graven Hill is you don't need a contingency fund for the ground work and that's huge. That in itself reduces the design risk right down.”

Anticipation leads to celebration

An excitable buzz of anticipation and inspiration filled the room at Bicester Technology Studio as the first plots for Phase 1B were released on sale at a special launch event.

On Saturday, 4 November more than 200 people registered their attendance to be amongst the first people to view the initial 24 plots being released as part of Phase 1B.

Armed with chequebooks, ideas and lots of questions, customers engaged in detailed discussions with four members of Graven Hill's sales team, with many taking the opportunity to pick their perfect plot by handing over a deposit on the day. Those who did – or who reserve before 30 November – will have their Stamp Duty paid by Graven Hill.

Sales manager Gemma Davis said: "There was a really good, excitable buzz about the day and everyone, including us, got a lot out of it. In the first two weeks we have sold over 40 per cent of the available plots at Phase 1B and there are still a lot of enquiries to follow up.

"Before the event had even started we had people contacting us to reserve their plots and as soon as the doors opened, we took our first cheque. That alone demonstrates the level of demand there is at Graven Hill and set the precedent for the rest of the day as we met with customer after customer to discuss how to turn plot plans into their perfect property."

In addition to the sales team, customers were also able to attend informative seminars by Graven Hill's managing

director Karen Curtin as well as TV presenter and architectural designer Charlie Luxton. In between sessions, customers could opt to take a mini bus tour of Graven Hill or meet with industry experts for briefing sessions or one-to-one meetings to discuss issues such as finance, sustainability and the different approaches to self-build.

The event attracted people from across the UK, from as far south as Dorset to the northern regions of Yorkshire with the ages of customers ranging from first time buyers in their early 20s to people in their 70s seeking to downsize during their retirement.

Elaine Walder, sales and marketing director, said: "To summarise the day in one word I would say inspiring. There was inspiration from the experts, but also the ambitions of people in the room who were so excited to be embarking on this journey.

"There was so much noise in the room as people spoke not only to the experts, but to each other as they really engaged in the community environment that is at the heart of the Graven Hill vision. People were thrilled to have this opportunity available to them and to be able to create their dream home, which will be truly life changing."

A total of 92 plots will form Phase 1B, with more opportunities due to be released over the Christmas and New Year period. Keep an eye on the Graven Hill website and Rightmove for more information and offers over the coming weeks.

**SEE THE EXCITEMENT
FOR YOURSELF!**

There was real buzz at the launch of the first plots for Phase 1B; but don't just take our word for it.

▶ See for yourself



What a difference a year makes

As we prepare to enter 2018 it's a chance to look back – and what a year it's been!

We have seen the countryside transform into a community; the pioneers have been joined on site by developers delivering the first affordable and Tailored Finish new-build homes. Self-builders have snapped up plots on Phase 1A and 1B. And the Graven Hill team moved into its own new home when the Plot Shop opened in the centre of Bicester. **Here's a quick look back at 2017.**

JANUARY TO MARCH

Progress continued at pace as the infrastructure continued to be installed on the site.



APRIL TO JUNE

The Graven Hill team moved into its own new home and we celebrated as E.P Barrus was named as our first commercial occupier.



JULY TO SEPTEMBER

This busy period was a hive of activity as the first Tailored Finish new-build homes started to go up, the Housing Minister paid a visit to our innovative project and Graven Hill clinched the Best Custom Build Project award at the 2017 Build It Awards.



OCTOBER TO DECEMBER

There was an action-packed end to the year as Bromford acquired the first affordable homes, we had the successful launch of Phase 1B, work commenced on Golden Brick plots and the skyline took on a different shape as buildings became homes.



EVENT DIARY 2017/2018

To keep up-to-date with our events visit our website, follow us on social media or call the sales team on **01869 396070**.

2017

30 November

National Self Build and Renovation Centre Partners' Forum

30 November

Bicester Christmas Lights Switch On
4.30pm – 8pm, Sheep Street, Bicester

2 December

Graven Hill guided site tours (fully booked*)

*We are always adding new site tours so please contact our sales team to be added to the waiting list.

2018

13 January

'Hard hat tours' of the Graven Hill new-build homes

More details coming soon - keep an eye on our social media for announcements.

20 January

Graven Hill guided site tour

27-28 January

National Self Build and Renovation Show, Swindon

17 February

Graven Hill guided site tours

17 March

Graven Hill guided site tours

Bookings for the site tours can be made via eventbrite.co.uk



Contact the sales team:
sales@gravenhill.co.uk

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The next Graven Hill Overview will be published in JANUARY 2018.

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IMPORTANT

Please note that the contents of this newsletter express Graven Hill Village Development Company's current thinking (October 2017). Graven Hill is a pioneering, long-term project which will inevitably evolve and change over time. Our sales team will advise you of the processes, procedures and terms and conditions of the sales contract in force at the time of purchase.

