

How Golden Brick can help  
you achieve your perfect  
home at Graven Hill  
- see p3 for the full story

FEBRUARY 2018



## Overview

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## Design your dream home with Charlie Luxton!

We are launching the chance to win the services of Building the Dream's Charlie Luxton and his team of architects at our Self-Build Made Simple event on 10 March.

This free event will feature a coach tour of Graven Hill, details of the latest plots available and seminars with guest speakers - as well as the launch of our incredible competition by Charlie himself.

Find out more on Page 2

# A message from the managing director

It is February already and 2018 is shaping up to be a busy year.

**Last month the Plot Shop was packed with customers eager to get on to our first tours inside the tailored new-build homes mid-construction and the sales team had a productive weekend at the Build It! Live show in Kent.**

The last few remaining Golden Brick plots on Phase 1a are being snapped up and our Self-Build Made Simple event in March is shaping up nicely.

Many of our purchasers are now well on their way to building their dream home. Others are

gearing themselves up to start on site in the coming months. No matter how far down the road you are, we are here to help. Whether it's information on how to obtain a mortgage or practical tips for getting your project off the ground, the Graven Hill team is here to support you every step of the way. We want to make Graven Hill the place where building dream homes and finding the lifestyle you desire can become a reality.



Rainbows over the site earlier this month.

## A golden opportunity to design with Charlie Luxton



**Find out how to win the chance to design your dream home with Charlie Luxton by coming along to our Self-Build Made Simple event next month, where Charlie himself will launch the competition.**

The TV presenter and architectural designer will be a guest speaker at the event on 10 March where prospective buyers can hear more from Charlie and other industry experts about our simplified self-build process.

Managing director Karen Curtin said:

“This is a fantastic opportunity for anyone who likes the idea of designing their dream home but isn't sure where to start. Not only will you be able to learn more about the concept of “Golden Brick” and which plots are available, but you could win a concept design from Charlie Luxton and his team, whose expertise in this field is extensive.”

“The Golden Brick process is specific to Graven Hill. This event is intended to inform and inspire people, so they will feel empowered to pursue their vision and turn their dream home into a reality.”

The event will take place at Bicester Technology Studio on Saturday 10 March with two sessions scheduled to accommodate the demand. Both will include a keynote welcome from Charlie Luxton, a coach tour of Graven Hill and the market forum, where you can mingle with key suppliers.

The programme includes a choice of three workshops; the different custom-build routes to delivering your home, self-build finances and budgeting for your project and the unique advantages of Graven Hill, including the Golden Brick process and the benefits of building your home at the beautiful, semi-rural site.

The team from FLTR, a local not-for-profit café, will be providing refreshments on arrival.

**For more information visit [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) and search ‘Graven Hill’ or call us on 01869 396070**



# Golden Brick – under the microscope

Many of us love the idea of building our own home; it gives the opportunity to design something specific to our own style, needs and budget. Want a large garden? You can have one! Like open plan living? Not a problem! Or maybe you want a home reflective of your individual style? Well why not? The benefits are endless. But despite fantasising about our dream home, very few of us get past the ideas stage.

Trying to find the right land, obtaining planning consent and the perception of cost and effort vs reward often puts people off. Plus, there are the practical challenges such as disposing of excavated material, ensuring sufficient drainage and connecting services to the plot which are all daunting prospects. But with the Golden Brick option at Graven Hill, we've taken care of the worries, leaving you free to focus on the fantasy!

## The first question to answer is 'What is the Golden Brick'?

When you purchase a plot at Graven Hill, as well as the land you also purchase the ground floor slab, foundations and drainage system which are totally bespoke to your design. In addition, services are terminated at the plot boundary for future connections to be made by you. The reason we have chosen this route is we are actually transferring to you a partially built home, rather than bare land. In tax speak this means the sale constitutes "the grant of a first major interest in a residential dwelling", which attracts a **zero rating for VAT** under current HMRC rules. In simple terms we do not have to include the VAT we have incurred in providing the roads, footways, drainage and landscaping which service the plot within your purchase price.

Once you have decided on the design and construction method of your home, and obtained planning permission, we will take your technical drawings and design your substructure, foundations and drainage. Once agreed, we will construct them



using a contractor approved by Premier Guarantee, the provider of the structural guarantee for your property. This takes the hassle out of things for you as **we take away the headache** of the riskiest part of any build – the ground conditions. Once the scope of works is finalised and we have provided a cost to you, this price is fixed regardless of actual ground conditions encountered or the impact of our wonderful weather. Not only can you trust that the works is being carried out by a quality, approved contractor but, by grouping the foundations together, the cost of supervision and equipment is shared between you and your neighbours' plots, which also helps to keep the cost down. We also provide you with a **10 year structural warranty from Premier Guarantee**

and will dispose of the excavated material from your plot; which means by the time we have finished the groundworks, you'll be fully-equipped to start building that dream home!

## So, now comes the question of cost.

Once the technical drawings, which are designed to accommodate the specific requirements of your home including things such as hard standings and topsoil, are agreed we will be able to give you a guaranteed price for your bespoke foundations. This price includes the resources needed to lay the foundations including the construction workers, equipment, infrastructure, testing and work. It also includes the provision of points of connection for power, water, telecoms and gas which you will then extend to your home. You can use water and power from the points of connection during your building works but will need to arrange installation of a meter for electricity. As these supplies are yours, you will meet the cost of the electricity or water used. The final Golden



Brick price reflects your individual design and the characteristics of your chosen plot, so once you tell us exactly what you need, we will be able to let you know how much it will cost. Everyone's dream home is different and so is their foundations. Remember a 'golden rule' for avoiding unnecessary costs before you have even got out of the ground is to minimise changes in direction and loadbearing walls or extra elements which require foundations to support them.

Throughout this process, you will have a Development Liaison Manager who will be your main point of contact. They will provide a schedule of what information Graven Hill requires and when, so you know what is expected and who to talk to if you have any questions.

Now you know more about the Golden Brick process, here's the important question...

### How do you pick the perfect plot?

We have a few handy hints to help you along the way...

- Consider the orientation of the plot. If a south facing garden is a must, make sure you check that out before you start.
- Keep it simple! Just because you can build to a certain gross internal area doesn't mean you have to. Remember, the bigger and more complex the design, the more expensive it is to deliver. Decide what is important to you and stick to it!
- Consider the number of load bearing walls – the more you have, the higher the cost of the foundations.
- Study your Plot Passport, it is an invaluable resource which will guide you to the most suitable plot.
- Understand how the ground conditions influence your build – the deeper the foundations need to be, the deeper your pockets will need to be.
- Look at the slope or gradient change; changing the levels may prove costly.
- Everyone loves the idea of a basement, and we do allow them for up to 40 per cent of your gross internal area but remember they do entail significant cost and work so think carefully about whether it is on your list of 'must-haves'.



PLOT 34



PLOT 36



PLOT 40



PLOT 41

Golden Brick foundation on Plot 41.

There is a lot to consider when building your own home; but don't be put off. We are here to help you every step of the way. Come in and chat to the team, and let us lay the foundations for you (quite literally) so we can support you as you transform ideas, bricks and mortar into a happy home!



# Touring the tailored terraces

In January, almost one hundred people donned their sensible boots to visit the first Tailored Finish new-build homes at Graven Hill. Excited visitors were given an in-depth look inside these amazing PassivHaus homes to learn more about our custom build opportunities. These are the properties, delivered by Graven Hill, which give purchasers the chance to customise their interior by choosing from different layout options, determining the size and configuration of the rooms, and deciding on finishes.

Elaine Walder, Sales & Marketing Director said:

“We were thrilled at the level of interest in this event. Everyone was keen to see the site itself, the landscaping, the woodland and trees but were particularly drawn to the homes themselves.

“People liked the look of the properties and the size of the rooms and were impressed with the PassivHaus features. The phones were ringing almost non-stop in the days after the event and the Plot Shop was busier than usual as people clamoured to make reservations. All in all, this was a resounding success and really brought to life the variety of opportunities at Graven Hill.”

The tours were accompanied by a PassivHaus expert who explained the benefits of these exceedingly energy efficient houses. The MHVR (Mechanical Heat and Ventilation Recovery) system is exceptionally quiet and is set up so that moisture is removed from the air which stops bathroom mirrors from steaming up. Adjoining walls have a gap in between to prevent noise transference between properties. This makes them three times more sound-proof than is required by Building Control, removing the main concern that often puts people off a terraced property.

3 bed Tailored Finish terraces nearing completion.



**For more information on the Tailored Finish new-build properties call our helpful sales team on 01869 396070.**





## EVENT DIARY 2018

**10 March**

### Self Build Made Simple

Reserve your spaces here! Book via [Eventbrite.co.uk](http://Eventbrite.co.uk) or by calling 01869 396070

**17 March**

### Graven Hill guided site tours\*

**22-25 March**

### Homebuilding and Renovating Show

– NEC, Birmingham

**14 April**

### Graven Hill guided site tours\*

**9-10 June**

### Build It Live, Bicester



\*Bookings for the site tours can be made via **Eventbrite.co.uk**

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



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The next Graven Hill Overview will be published in MARCH 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.

