COMING SOON!
The next phase of Graven Hill will be released at a star-studded event. Read on to see how you can get involved.

OCTOBER 2017

GRAVEN HILL
IMAGINE.CREATE.BUILD.LIVE.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Launch of our next phase
- A personal journey – an update from the Kirkman family
- Site progress photographs
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The wait is nearly over for the eagerly anticipated release of the next phase of plots at Graven Hill.

FOR ONE DAY ONLY
...we'll pay your stamp duty!*

Saturday 4th November will see the unveiling of Phase 1B at a special launch event and what's more, anyone who makes a reservation on the day will have their stamp duty paid for by Graven Hill!

See inside for full details of the launch and how you can secure your place.

*Terms and Conditions apply.

IMPORTANT Please note that the contents of this newsletter express Graven Hill Village Development Company's current thinking (Sept 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.

Unveiling Phase 1B

Welcome to this edition of Overview which brings exciting news of the next phase of plots to be released at the site.

Over the past couple of months we have finally been able to give guided minibus tours of the site to our buyers and prospective buyers to show them the beauty of Graven Hill. Although there are still restrictions as to where we can go, it feels good to be on the other side of the perimeter fence! You will be able to see the rapid progress that's happening through the selection of photographs we have chosen for this edition.

Last month three of our buyers, Simon and Maggie Kirkman and their son Toby, took the tour to see the progress that has been made. In this edition we catch up with Maggie and in her own words, she talks us through her ongoing Graven Hill journey. Her enthusiasm continues to be an inspiration and highly infectious. (see page 5).

Finally, the last couple of months have been very busy for the team who have been out and about at various shows including the Help to Buy show and the Big Green Homes show – it has been interesting to get your feedback and to share in your excitement for the project. For those who came to see us, it was a pleasure and for those we have not yet met – we look forward to seeing you at our Phase 1B launch event on 4th November.

Those who are excited by the opportunity of living at Graven Hill have a chance to achieve their dream as more plots are released for sale.

Phase 1B will comprise 88 Golden Bricks, four Pocket Plots and 26 Tailored Finish homes.

All plots are located close to the woodland hill and are joined to Phase 1A by a tree-lined swale park.

The plots will be released in tranches, initially with detached Golden Brick and Pocket Plots being available. These plots range in size so there is something for every need and budget.

Prices and details will be announced at the launch event with regular updates appearing on our website.

www.gravenhill.co.uk

Sales and marketing director Elaine Walder said:

"This next release signals a shift in the pace of development on site. We are thrilled to welcome more residents on their Graven Hill journey and share this exciting time with them."

Who needs fireworks when you can join us for the big launch?

Hear from the experts, talk to the team, take a tour of the site and most importantly, reserve your plot!

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

On Saturday 4th November, you are invited to join TV presenter and architectural designer Charlie Luxton, industry experts and the Graven Hill team for our big reveal of the next phase of plots. This lively and informative event has been planned to arm prospective self-builders with a wealth of advice and information so they can make an informed choice.

Graven Hill managing director Karen Curtin said: "For anyone who is interested in buying a plot this is an absolutely fantastic opportunity. At previous events, demand was so high we had people queuing with their cheque books to reserve a plot. On November 4th, with the added incentive of stamp duty being paid, we anticipate a sensational day of sales.

"We are therefore encouraging people to sign-up early to the event to avoid disappointment," she added.

minibus trips to see the site

interactive taster-sessions

reserve your plot

When: **Saturday 4th November 2017**

Where: Bicester Technology Studio School, Queens Avenue, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 2NS

Timings: 9:00am – 10:30pm
repeated at 12noon – 2:30pm and then 3:00pm – 5:30pm

*Terms and Conditions apply.

What's happening at the Phase 1B Launch?

Self-build champion Charlie Luxton will join Karen in welcoming everyone to the grand unveiling before sharing his thoughts on how choosing to design your own home can truly enhance your life.

Taster Information Sessions and the Market Forum

Pick from a range of informative workshops – we're running them twice so you can do more on the day! These will be followed by an invaluable opportunity for you to have one-to-one discussions and informal chats during our Market Forum where you can ask those burning questions.

You will be able to boost your self-build know-how with insights from the experts who can help you maximise the benefits of building your own home.

- Discuss your own unique ideas with different custom-build home providers to get a sense of the different routes available to self-build.
- Learn about the money and energy saving potential of green building techniques so you can help save the environment, and your heating bills!
- Get to grips with self-build finance options, or the Help to Buy offer, to demystify the different products available and how they differ from standard mortgages. It's much simpler than a lot of people think!
- Sit down for a complimentary design consultation with an architectural designer who can give expert advice on making your ideas a reality.

Site tours

A limited number of places have been arranged on site tours so you can see behind the scenes as work progresses. Don't worry if you can't fit one in on the day – we are planning more over the coming months.

Pick your plot

Our friendly sales team will be on hand to offer guidance on picking the right space for your dream home and they will be delighted to help you reserve the plot.

Hear from our expert contributors

- Build It Magazine
- Charlie Luxton Design
- Buildstore
- Sylva
- Beattie Passive
- IMS
- National Self Build and Renovation Centre
- The Graven Hill Team

How to Book

Tickets will not be available on the day so sign up in advance by searching for Graven Hill Phase 1B on

www.eventbrite.co.uk

From there you will pick your perfect combination from the series of activities, workshops and talks and sign up for the always-popular minibus tours.

A tale of two homes

Earlier this year we featured an article on Simon and Maggie Kirkman who had just purchased a four-bedroom plot at Graven Hill, as had their son Toby. In this edition of 'Overview' we catch up with Maggie to see just how things are progressing.

The first thing that Maggie is able to tell us is good news. An important milestone has been reached, as they received confirmation of planning compliance for their home in August and earlier this month their son Toby also obtained his.

Since receiving this Simon and Maggie have been able to progress on their Graven Hill journey by finalising the design of their Golden Brick foundation – which is now in the process of being costed-up.

Once this has happened, the Graven Hill Village Development Company will construct the foundations on behalf of the Kirkmans, taking them to the purchase completion stage. Work will then commence on the build of their new home which is expected to get under way early next spring.

"It is not just about the house, it really is about the location."

It all sounds simple – and deliberately so.

The two generations decided to buy exactly the same four-bedroomed house which will be mirror images of each other. From placing an order for their new homes to delivery to site, it will take just 12 weeks and the onsite construction even less – approximately 6-8 weeks. The Kirkmans can then move in – although microwave meals may be on the cards until their new kitchen is fitted!

Simon, Maggie and Toby picked what is known in the industry as a 'turn-key solution' – the house is built, you turn the key in the lock and move straight in – and we were interested in why they had chosen this route.

"It's quite straightforward," she explains.

"All three of us are no strangers to getting our hands dirty, having completed a number of self-builds in the past. But Simon and I have now retired and we didn't really want to undertake some of the more physically challenging aspects. As for Toby, he simply doesn't have the time, juggling family life with a demanding full-time job.

"Going down the manufactured home route has provided us with an ideal solution. The house we've chosen suits our needs, and our budget, and it will give us a home that is far superior to anything else on a new-build development. It also has many energy efficient features that will reduce its future running costs."

One of the key drivers behind the Kirkmans' decision to move to Graven Hill was the availability of the land.

"It is not just about the house, it really is about the location," continues Maggie.

"We recently re-visited the development on one of the Graven Hill site tours – it was a glorious October day and the excitement, even before we boarded the mini-bus, was amazing.

"For many purchasers, this was the first time they were going to see the site from within the perimeter fencing. The excited chatter on the bus continued on our journey, but then we arrived and the noise stopped – you could hear a pin drop – the scenery was breath-taking.

"Unlike many barren and soulless new-build sites where developers strip everything out, Graven Hill has retained as much of the original landscaping and features as possible including the mature planting and of course the hill."

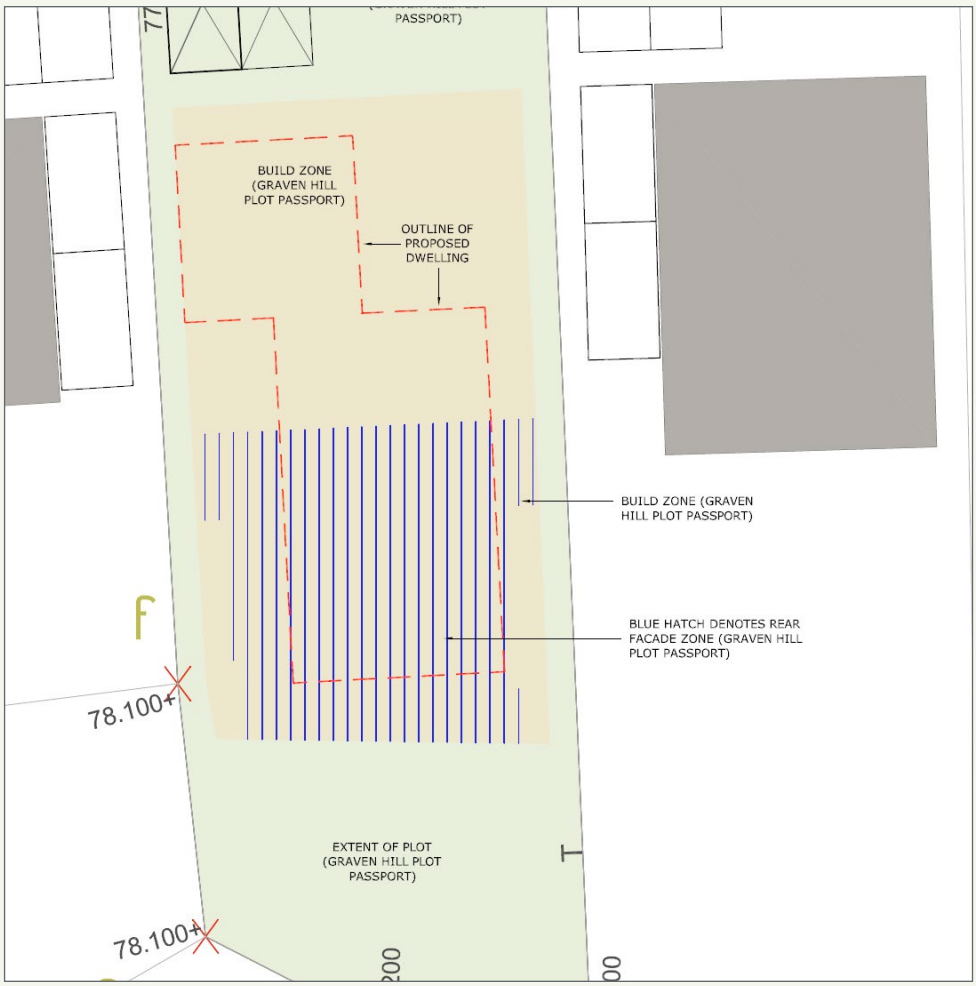
We asked Maggie what hasn't gone so well?

"Nothing really," says Maggie.

"Living in rented accommodation isn't ideal, it is not our style of property, but we know there is a light at the end of the tunnel. And whilst we are 100 per cent convinced that a manufactured home is the right choice, it is difficult when you are reliant on others. But we knew what we were letting ourselves in to".

But not having to do the physical build means that the Kirkmans can focus on other aspects of creating their dream home and they haven't wasted any time. The new kitchen and bathrooms have already been selected as well as carpets, floor tiles, internal doors, and open-tread staircase. Paint colours for interior walls have been selected as well as the colour of the rendering to the exterior – the list goes on!

Maggie has also been speaking with landscapers, but admits getting quotes for work on a site that the suppliers cannot even access does have some challenges – but she is matter of fact about this as she knows it will all be sorted in time.



So, what about the dreaded 'B' word ... BUDGET

Maggie's advice: "Set a budget, (plus 10 per cent contingency) and stick to it!"

It's a myth that every self-build goes over budget – the Kirkmans know, they have done this before and never have – and they know it won't be any different this time.

Finally, we asked Maggie for her best bit of advice for anyone thinking of building at Graven Hill. Her response...

"Pay attention to the fabric of the building first and foremost – the rest will follow. Don't start to blow your budget before you get out of the ground. The nice-to-haves can be added in later, getting the building right has to be the main goal."

Overview will continue to follow the progress of Maggie and Simon over the coming months and we look forward to introducing you to Toby soon.

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SITE PROGRESS REPORT

A picture paints a thousand words, particularly at Graven Hill.

Progress continues apace at Graven Hill with the skyline changing every day. The Tailored Finish and Affordable homes have reached roof level already and rapid progress is being made with the infrastructure in preparation for our self-builders starting their construction. A total of 30 percent of purchasers have received planning compliance and are finalising their Golden Brick foundations so the site will soon be busier still.

Adrian Unitt, operations director said "This has been a period of intense construction activity at Graven Hill to make the site ready for our purchasers. With such a large and complex project so many elements need to come together at the same time and I am delighted that it has gone so smoothly. I look forward to seeing the site evolve as we move to the next phase."

With the launch of the next phase uppermost in our minds, approximately 20,000m^3 of earth has been removed to form the Phase 1B crescent platform. This enormous undertaking was achieved using the latest 3D machine controlled by GPS technology.

MYTHBUSTERS

Do you have a burning question that you want answered?

MYTH
I've heard up to 1,900 homes are planned for the site; does this mean they will be packed in close together with little green space?

TRUTH
No! The open space at Graven Hill is as important to the character of the site as the buildings themselves.

The site already has an abundance of rich greenery which has been protected as far as possible. And a great deal of careful planning has been put into the design of the site, with the addition of woodland, fields, allotments and wetland habitats.

One of the site's features – The Gateway Park – will be immediately visible at the site entrance, this lush and informal wetland park will contain swales, ponds, marginal planting, meadows and meandering walking and cycle routes.

There will also be recreational parks for the enjoyment of residents and visitors like. In a nutshell Graven Hill will be one of the most green and attractive developments in the country. Bicester is, after all, a designated Garden Town!

MYTH
I like the idea of moving to Graven Hill but worried that it could be expensive to build my own home.

TRUTH
Our vision for Graven Hill is of an all-inclusive community that meets the needs and budgets of everyone. Whilst there are opportunities for people to build larger homes, we have also ensured that there are options for those on a more modest budget.

Our 'Pocket Plots' are available from just over £100,000 which enables you to design a two bedroom home, with a garden plus parking for a total cost of in the region of £270,000.

And if you don't fancy taking on a self-build, our ready-made Tailored Finish homes start from just £287,500 and offer a choice of layouts and high-quality finishes. Not only are they great value but you get a better home for a better price AND you could receive Help to Buy support.

This will be your home and your design, so you will be in control.

MYTH
I can't speak to a sales person to see which plots or homes are available because there's no marketing suite on site.

TRUTH
Whilst it's true that there is no sales presence on the Graven Hill site at the moment, the Plot Shop in central Bicester is open six days a week. You are welcome to make an appointment, or just pop in and we will be happy to talk you through the available options. If it's outside office hours you can also go to the 'Find your home' section on the front page of our website (www.gravenhill.co.uk) where you will be able to check availability and look at the individual plot passports. You can see all our contact details on the final page of this edition of Overview.

Big Green Show is a great big success

Word has spread even further about the unique opportunities at Graven Hill after the sales team attended the Big Green Home Show.

The event, which took place at the National Self Build and Renovation Centre in Swindon, featured 220 exhibitors including representatives from the Graven Hill sales team.

Although it was the team's first time attending the event, the stand attracted interest from potential self-builders who were eager to learn more about the development and plots available at Graven Hill.

Sales Manager Gemma Davis said: "It was a really successful event. We met a lot of new people who commented on how impressed they were with the Graven Hill concept and how inspiring it was for such a unique opportunity to be available to self-builders."

The Graven Hill sales team were joined at the event by experts offering advice on sustainable issues including heating and renewable energy, architecture and eco technologies. More events are planned at the centre and we will keep you posted about out attendance in future newsletters.

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

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The next Graven Hill Overview will be published in NOVEMBER 2017.

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