RYEWOOD

SEVENOAKS

SPRING NEWSLETTER

ISSUE EIGHT

TOPPING OUT CEREMONY MARKS HIGHEST POINT OF CONSTRUCTION FOR SHARED OWNERSHIP HOMES

Peter Smith is pictured with Clive Astall from Orbit Homes and Councillor Jill Dawson from Sevenoaks District Council. A tree was also planted by the water feature located at the entrance to the development to mark the occasion.

A ceremony was held last month to mark the highest point of construction for the new homes being built by Berkeley Homes Eastern Counties on behalf of Orbit Homes, at the Ryewood development in Sevenoaks.

Berkeley acquired the site in 2003 and with over 100 homes now built and occupied, Ryewood has become a highly sought-after, sustainable community. This new phase, constructed for Orbit Homes will provide 49 high quality shared ownership homes to buy, plus a further 15 homes to rent with completions commencing in Summer 2015 and continuing through to 2016.

Peter Smith, Managing Director, Berkeley Homes Eastern Counties, said, "We are delighted to be working in partnership with Orbit Homes, Sevenoaks District Council and the HCA to create high quality homes that will be available to purchase under the shared ownership scheme or rent. Ryewood has already proven to be a highly desirable development, with the majority of the homes to date purchased off-plan. "

Clive Astall, Head of Development at Orbit, added, "Berkeley's excellent reputation for producing high quality homes combined with the desirable Sevenoaks location will make these very popular homes for Orbit's residents".

CUSTOMER SERVICE

We held a community evening at Ryewood on the 9th April for all new customers of the Phase 3 Crescent Block. It was a relaxed social event with wine and canapés and an opportunity for residents to meet their new neighbours and mingle with the build, sales and customer service teams as well as our managing agents. It was a fantastic evening and a great way to encourage the community to flourish, which is a key part of Berkeley's Our Vision commitments. It was also an opportunity to hear about the sustainability benefits of the new homes at Ryewood.

SALES SUCCESS

The Ryewood team hit the ground running as we entered 2015. Louise Norman has now joined Marilyn and Emily to bolster the team and help deal with a very busy selling period.

With nearly 20 new visitors each week, news about the range of one and two bed apartments in Greenwoods has been spreading fast. We have helped find 20 new homes for people so far this year. Demand for this prime location is such that we are selling off plan well ahead of completion dates.

Also gaining significant interest is the eagerly awaited Aspen Place release, which will see a fresh range of houses come onto the market on May 2nd. As always we have adapted and developed our designs at Ryewood to meet the demands of our buyers, with two-storey 3 and 4 bedroom houses available, and many with garages.

CONSTRUCTION

Project Manager Gary Gill is pleased to announce that construction on the development is progressing well, with phase 2, The Grove, now complete and fully occupied. Work on The Oaks is drawing to a close, with all homes now watertight and some occupied.

Work to phase 3, The Greenwoods, is progressing well, with most of the superstructure complete.

Phases 5 and 6 are being prepared for piling scheduled for summer this year.

Within the past year the construction team at Ryewood have completed around 250,000 hours with a workforce of around 150 operatives per day. Ryewood has also received a Considerate Contractor award for last year's efforts.

MOVING FROM LONDON TO RYEWOOD IS A LOGICAL AND ATTRACTIVE OPTION FOR GARY AND JANE WALKER

Gary and Jane Walker are currently living in a two bedroom flat in Borough in the heart of zone one and have recently purchased a home at Ryewood. After moving to the UK from Toronto, Canada at the age of eight, 34-year-old Jane now owns a contemporary dance company and has lived in London for the last 15 years. Meanwhile, IT Manager Gary, 33, moved to the UK from his native Hong Kong, China, when he was 13 years old and has spent the last decade in the capital.

The Walkers had a lengthy checklist when it came to buying together for a second time as they needed to consider their needs to start a family, to be closer to friends and family out of the city whilst also still being able to travel to London with ease for work. They found those boxes ticked when they discovered their spacious four bedroom crescent house with a garden at Ryewood.

"We've loved every minute of living in London, but we were both starting to tire of the constant buzz and lack of space," Gary said. "We have found ourselves getting stuck in traffic most weekends when trying to visit friends and family in Surrey and Kent, plus, we are planning on starting a family and don't fancy the idea of bringing up a child in zone one!

"Before we even considered moving from our current home – also a Berkeley property at the Empire Square development – we had a shortlist of 'must have' features that the new property would need. We needed a garage or secure parking, three or more bedrooms, a garden, to be close to an area for walking and jogging and quick access into central London."

After seeing Ryewood advertised online, the Walkers called the development sales team to discuss their requirements and arranged a viewing. The development suited their needs perfectly so they made an offer three days later and freed up cash for a deposit with the soaring equity on their existing home.

Gary said: "We found the outdoor space and its location close to Dunton Green train station, which can get us into central London in 40 minutes on a single line, particularly appealing, in addition to the quality and specification of the property and its value for money."

"We love the fact that there are so many highly rated OFSTED schools in the area and that we will be so close to a nature reserve, which I'm sure will become our regular weekend walking spot, plus we will definitely both use the onsite gym."

While Jane will mostly be working from home, she will still be travelling all around London due to the nature of her job and Gary will be commuting into Cannon Street Station to his office in St Pauls.

"We looked at many areas in our property search including ones popular with commuters such as New Beckenham. We liked some of the properties we saw, but the issue was that those areas we looked at were already known as being 'commuter villages' and so we found we'd face paying a premium and suffering from a lack of space for our money. When we sat down and actually compared timings, travelling in from most end-of-line tube stations would take far longer than travelling in via train from areas much further out. Sevenoaks came up and Ryewood was the first development we came to see."

Gary and Jane are due to move in towards the end of this year.

SPRING INTO SUSTAINABLE ACTION

This spring save money and resources by thinking carefully about your usage. Here are a few energy and water saving quick wins to save you money:

- Set your washing machine to wash at 30°C – This saves energy used to heat up your water.
- Use a bowl to wash up rather than leaving the hot tap running – 10 minutes of rinsing dishes can waste 100 litres of water, compared to 10 used in a bowl.
- Don't fill your kettle up every time, only boil the amount of water you need -if you are having one cup of tea don't fill the kettle to the brim, this will save time and energy!
- Veg United – Use a large pan to cook all of your veg, adding them at the right times. Less energy, less water and less washing up!

Why not spend more time outdoors now the days are longer with a few ideas to keep you and the family busy outside…

- Plant a sunflower each and see who can grow the tallest flower – These even help provide food for bees!
- Have your own wildlife day – See how many types of birds come to your garden by putting bird feeder outside.
- Make your own bug hotel with sticks, straw, old bricks and logs.
- Grow your own vegetables – Beetroot, Tomatoes, Carrots and Courgettes fresh from your garden to the dinner plate!