



New show home at The Croft

Larkfleet Homes has officially opened a show home at the newest phase of its age-exclusive development for the over-55s – The Croft in Baston, Lincolnshire.



THE CROFT AT BASTON
DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE OVER 55s



The opening was marked by a ribbon-cutting ceremony performed by Larkfleet Homes CEO Karl Hick in front of an invited VIP audience. Guests then joined in the opening celebrations and

shared some light refreshments.

The show house will give prospective buyers the opportunity to experience a 'real life' version of their potential new home.

The second phase of development at The Croft at Baston is a small number of new homes which sits alongside the highly successful fully-sold first phase, extending the community but keeping it at a modest scale.

The official opening gave guests a chance to see for themselves the quality and finish of one of Larkfleet Homes' newest developments.

Karl Hick said: "Developments from Larkfleet Homes under The Croft brand are designed to provide the over-55s, whether retired or still working, with the independence of owning their own homes combined with the benefits of being part of a community.

"Baston is very close to our head office and we have done an awful lot of development in this area.

"I have actually lived here in Baston in the past and it's a pleasant village – I've got some positive sentiments for the place.

"The first phase of our retirement scheme here went well and now we're delivering the second phase."

The properties at the Croft in Baston are designed and built to suit the busy lifestyles

of today's homebuyers. They are mostly one and two-bedroom bungalows but there are also some three-bedroom chalet bungalows for those who want a little extra space. All have been designed to need minimal ongoing maintenance so that residents benefit from the independence and security of property ownership without the concerns of property upkeep.

Situated close to the A15, The Croft at Baston offers easy access by car or bus to the cities of Peterborough and Lincoln, as well as nearby Bourne and the historic town of Stamford.

The bungalows are located around attractive walkways and gardens, creating a pleasant residential environment. The village itself has two excellent pubs with restaurants, a church, a hairdresser, a post office and a general store.

The new show home at The Croft, Baston, is open from Saturday to Tuesday between 10:00am and 5:00pm.

New grants for community

The Larkfleet Homes Community Fund supports charitable projects that enhance or develop a local community. The fund is part of our commitment to supporting the existing communities within which we are developing new homes and to helping the integration of our new developments within those communities.

Any charitable cause or community project that operates within ten miles (16 kilometres) of any Larkfleet Homes or Allison Homes development can apply for these grants. There is no restriction on the number of grants that can be given to a particular place but we will aim to ensure that the fund, over time, supports communities right across our area of operations. We will not offer grants to the same organisation more than once every three years.

Grants of between £250 and £5,000 (or more in special circumstances) are awarded on a quarterly basis with 'cut off' dates for submission on 1st Feb, 1st May, 1st Aug and 1st Nov each year. These grants from the Larkfleet Homes Community Fund are administered by the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation and full details are on its website.

Small grants

Sponsorships, gifts and grants of less than £250 are administered directly by Larkfleet Homes. We recognise that many small groups, seeking small donations, may not be able to meet all the requirements of the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation's application process.



LARKFLEET
IN THE COMMUNITY

The same criteria are used in assessing applications for small grants as are used for the larger grants administered by the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation. Our focus is on activities that enhance or develop local communities.

The Larkfleet Community Fund history

The Larkfleet Homes Community Fund has been operating since 2016 and has already made grants of over £10,000 to communities in Cambridgeshire and Rutland including:

- Giving £4,000 to Cottesmore Millfield Academy in Oakham, where some of the money has been used to purchase benches for the children to enjoy in the school gardens.
- Contributing £5,000 towards the cost of a new swimming pool at Eye Primary School which will be used by pupils and the local community.
- Supporting The Creech Party in the Park, which is a true community event with arts, crafts, activities, displays, refreshments, games and music, held in South West England.
- Sponsoring the Open Maiden race at Cottesmore Point-to-Point event held at Garthorpe that is run entirely by volunteers.
- Donating £500 to the RAF Association in Peterborough.
- Providing shirts for the choir at Bourne Elsea Park Primary Academy.



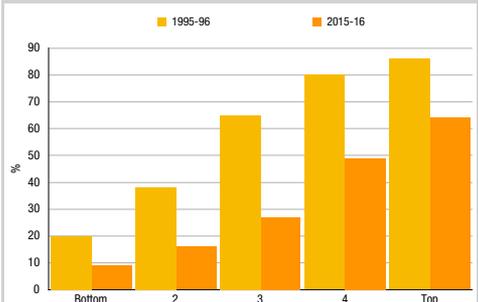
Getting on the housing ladder

A report commissioned by the BBC from the Institute for Fiscal Studies says that rising house prices have not only left fewer young people able to buy a home, they have also divided them into property "haves" and "have-nots".

It is not just the less well-off who have been affected. Among the most affluent top fifth of households - those with a family income of £41,000 a year after tax - the proportion of those aged 25 to 34 who own a home has fallen from 85 per cent 20 years ago to just 65 per cent today.

But, as the graph shows, the decline in home ownership among lower income groups has been even more dramatic.

Home ownership for 25-34 year olds, by income bracket



Graph copyright BBC

Source: IFS calculations using the Family Resources Survey 1995-96 and 2015-2016. Income is the net income of the individual, plus that of any cohabiting partner or spouse.



‘Big step forward’ for care unit

Larkfleet Homes has sold land to a specialist provider for the development of a care unit as part of the ‘continuing care retirement community’ (CCRC) which the company is creating in Oakham, Rutland. A 60-bed specialist care home will be developed over the next 12 months.

In addition to the care home the CCRC will have 62 one and two-bedroom homes for ‘independent living’ and 54 properties for ‘assisted living’ for people with particular care needs. These will be built by Larkfleet under its award winning The Croft brand for retirement properties.

Larkfleet started clearance work on site earlier this year and will soon be putting in the essential infrastructure such as roads and water supplies needed to permit construction of the new homes. The first homes by The Croft should be available for new owners during the Spring of 2019. Larkfleet Homes CEO Karl Hick said: “This is a big step forward for the project and allows us to advance development of this much-needed facility in Oakham. There is an urgent need for this type of accommodation to meet the needs of the increasing number of elderly people in the county.

“Putting independent living, assisted living and care home provision on the same site means that if people need to move from one type of accommodation to another as their care needs increase, they do not have to move away from family, friends and the social networks that they have built up. It can mean, for example, that if one half of a couple needs to move into the care home, his or her partner can remain in the independent living part of the development within easy walking distance.”

The CCRC is part of Larkfleet’s Oakham Heights development – a major urban expansion of Oakham being built on land between the Oakham bypass and Barleythorpe Road. Larkfleet’s first development under The Croft brand



THE CROFT AT OAKHAM
DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE OVER 55s

at Bourne in Lincolnshire won a Silver Award in the keenly-contested Best Retirement Development category in the prestigious WhatHouse? Awards in 2014. The following year The Croft at Baston, also in Lincolnshire, was shortlisted in the same award and was named runner-up in the HouseBuilder Awards for best retirement housing.

In total, more than 800 high quality homes – including ‘affordable’ homes for local people – will eventually be constructed in several phases at Oakham Heights as part of a development programme running until around 2027.

In addition to new housing, the plans include offices, parks and open spaces, children’s play areas, allotments and a new local centre. The plans also include a new hotel with an adjoining pub/restaurant, planting a substantial number of new trees, enhancements to the ecology of Barleythorpe Brook which runs through the site and improved transport links with new cycle, footpath and bus routes.

Integral parts of the development will be a new permanent enhanced and enlarged home for the Rutland County Show and new improved facilities for the town’s football, rugby and other clubs.

The Oakham Heights CCRC will create around 90 jobs for local people.

Is there a summer buying season?

It’s safe to say that deciding to buy or sell a house is backed by one of two mindsets; an impulsive desire to change your life or a well-thought through strategic next step.

There’s nothing to say which approach is the right one, or indeed the most lucrative, but each do require some sort of plan beyond the initial big decision.

So, if moving house has come from a moment of spontaneity, rational thinking will need to kick in at some point to make sure you are getting the best deal. Key considerations should include mortgage interest rates, the type of house you’re looking for, where you’d like to live and how the housing market is currently stacking up for buyers.

The ultimate question is: ‘Is now really a good time to move?’

With summer (more than one consecutive day of sunshine) in full swing, we should also consider moving house in the context of the seasons. And although this comes with much debate, there is a lot to be said for buying in the summer.

Everything looks better in the summer. The days are longer, the evenings are brighter, the gardens are greener and houses generally look happier (although there is something appealing about the coziness of a log fire in the winter). Summer brings with it a sense of

get up and go. People are inspired and enthusiastic – give them a project and it is generally achieved. After the mayhem of the spring house buying season, and before the autumn flurry, summer tends to be a little quieter. Lots of people favour holidays over houses meaning your choice of properties could be limited. The good news is that new developments don’t tend to be affected by the holiday season either and you could find the perfect plot to put your own mark on and make your home.

It’s can also a good season to bag yourself a property that’s perhaps been on the market for a while. Sellers that haven’t sold in the spring may not want to hold out until the autumn, and therefore a strong offer (that may not be the highest) could seal the deal. Play into the hands of the seller and present your benefits.

Offer them a cash deal if it’s an option. Equally as appealing is a quick turnaround as a result of a short chain. People have put their house on the market to sell, and there’s nothing more disheartening than it just sitting there.

Summer may be the season that you just make the decision to buy a new house. If this is the case you have the time to put the wheels in motion before the October rush hits. Make the most of the good weather to explore the areas you’d like to live, and get a feel for the type of houses that are available; they’ll almost certainly be looking their best right now. And, if you’re able to move quickly, there’s the incentive to be in and settled for Christmas (without sounding too cliché). Check out our locations, developments and homes to see if there’s one for you.

