

Regeneration

Fine homes are being built on everything from former offices to disused schools. Johnny Turner sees how developers are building on the past – and creating wonderful living spaces

Developers have made an art of the remaking of disused land and buildings into high-spec new homes. Every type of building, from offices to hospitals, pubs to schools, has found a new incarnation as residential space. The current market has a wide variety of high-quality homes with their roots in regeneration.

Bow is currently seeing a variety of premises transformed into very buyable new homes. With the Olympics making their way here in 2012, this area is set to become the premier regeneration area of London. A good example is EastSide, a collection of 132 apartments, from studios to two-beds, developed by Widacre Homes and Circle 33 Lifespace.

The Olympics will bring major regeneration to east London and buyers are flocking to the area. Bow's economy will benefit immensely from the influx of people coming to watch the Games and thousands of new jobs, homes and businesses that will be created.

Fraser Wells, managing director of Widacre Homes, says, 'We are confident that Bow will be one of the most vibrant and desirable places to live in east London and Widacre Homes, and Circle Anglia Group will contribute to this development by offering quality housing for at affordable price combined with what will become some of the best infrastructure in London.'

Besides being well located, EastSide is well-designed and affordably priced. And selling agents Strettons Residential has shown it's willing to go the extra mile to put prospective buyers in the home of their dreams.

One purchaser who found this helpful was Zoe B, 30, who works as an assistant general manager at a south London hospital. Like today's typical buyer, Zoe leads a very busy life – and this kept her from being able to give her old flat the attention it takes to effect a quick, successful sale. In fact, she had so little time to devote to it that her purchase looked likely to fall through. And that's where the Strettons came in.

After learning of Zoe's situation, Darren Aston, sales manager at EastSide, offered her some free advice on how to redress her old flat and to emphasise its best selling points. As a result, she was able to sell her old flat within the week and reserve a two-bedroom apartment at EastSide.

Zoe commented: 'I am absolutely delighted with the remarkable customer service provided by the sales staff at EastSide. Darren has been extremely helpful and gave me some fantastic "interior design" advice that was spot on. He then chased my solicitors and financial advisors and answered all my questions about EastSide right away. I was able to sell my old flat in record time and to exchange at EastSide much faster than I ever dreamed. I now can't wait to move into my new apartment at EastSide.'

The first phase at EastSide is now sold out, but the second phase has just been launched with apartments in the Soho building. Prices start from £179,950 for one-bedroom apartments and £242,450 for two-bedroom apartments. To find out more call Strettons New Homes on 020 7422 0989 or visit the website eastside-e3.com.

On the other side of London, Hounslow's town centre is on the brink of a major reinvention, and Barratt's Reflexion is set to be a big part of that. Reflexion will contain over 300 new homes, while the proposed Blenheim Centre will bring shops, bars, cafés and restaurants, as well as a cinema. Once completed this will truly be a centre of commerce, entertainment and high-spec living.

The design will be modern and the space light and airy. Many apartments will have balconies giving spectacular views over the Blenheim Centre. And transport is very convenient, with the Piccadilly Line just minutes away putting both central London and Heathrow within easy reach.

Prices currently start at £262,995 for a two-bedroom apartment. The marketing suite is now open. Call 020 8572 3668.

Only one apartment remains at The Edge, Furlong Homes' brand new scheme located near the Walthamstow Reservoirs. Developed by ASRA Greater London Housing Association along with Walthamstow council, the Housing Corporation and Furlong Homes, the development consists of 52 new homes in Riverhead Close, a quiet cul-de-sac off Blackhorse Lane, only minutes from Blackhorse Road tube and rail station. The last two-bedroom apartment is priced at £214,950. Interested parties should act quickly. Call 020 8531 8830.

Specialist developer Morgan Restoration has



Clockwise from above: EastSide in Bow; Barratt's Reflexion in Hounslow; stylish interiors at Little Heath in Swanley



launched Little Heath in Swanley, Kent with the opening of a stunning show apartment, bringing to life the sophisticated design and quality available at the development.

Located just four minutes' walk from Swanley station, Little Heath comprises ten two-bedroom and six one-bedroom apartments along with two office suites. Built on the former site of redundant local authority offices, the development is accommodated in a four-storey building with the ground floor providing undercroft parking.

The homes feature the best of contemporary open-plan design, combined with quality, craftsmanship and attention to detail, Morgan Restoration's hallmarks. Electronic gated access to secure covered car park on the ground floor is provided, and each apartment has an allocated parking space. There is a lift to all floors, accessible from either the car park or the main entrance.

Little Heath is ideal for commuting, shopping and leisure facilities as well as for national and international travel. For the London commuter, Swanley station offers a regular service to Victoria and Blackfriars with peak journey times of 30 minutes.



Prices for apartments at Little Heath range from £140,000 to £220,000. Contact 01322 866800 or visit morganrestoration.co.uk.

At Fairfield Park, an ambitious countryside regeneration project involving several developers located on the border of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, Stamford Homes aims to make moving house as hassle-free as possible. In fact, the developer will even consider buying your existing house from you.

Under its popular part exchange scheme, Stamford Homes will obtain valuations on your existing property on your behalf from two agents.

Regional sales manager Steve Matthews says, 'Providing you and your existing property meet certain criteria, Stamford Homes will then make you an offer for your existing property – usually the average price of the valuation.' Part-exchange takes away uncertainty, says Matthews – and that's one thing home buyers can do without.

Homes at Fairfield Park are currently priced from £255,000. The sales office and show home are open daily from 10.30am to 5pm. Contact the sales team on 01426 835192.