

'LOVINGLY MADE LUXURY' APPROACH WINS AWARD

DRIVEN BY AN ETHOS OF 'LOVINGLY MADE LUXURY', SINCE ITS CREATION IN 2007 NORFOLK-BASED FLEUR DEVELOPMENTS HAS BUILT AN IMPRESSIVE REPUTATION.



WHAT HOUSE AWARD. JOFF AND JULIETTE PRESENTED WITH AWARD

This was further enhanced last year when the company won the Gold Award for Best Small Housebuilder at the prestigious national WhatHouse? Awards 2018, which took place in November at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London. Construction Industry News recently caught up with Juliette Hopkins, who founded the company with Joff Brooker, to find out what the award means to the business and how it was achieved.

"We were absolutely delighted to have won this award and to have our passion for building good-looking homes recognised nationally," explains Juliette. "As a design-led housebuilder we care deeply about our mark on the landscape."

With a team of just 15 staff, supported by a team of trusted sub-contractors, Fleur may be a small housebuilder but this

certainly isn't proving to be a barrier to its ambitions. With plans to take on increasingly large developments in Norfolk and Suffolk, the company looks determined not to deviate from its core values. "We strive to only use good quality, local materials and we've become known for our refusal to compromise on our generosity with space and light, provision of attractive landscaping and the importance of aesthetics," adds Juliette.

These values obviously impressed the judges of the WhatHouse? Awards, which are generally likened to the Oscars of the building industry. With comedian Jack Whitehall and sports commentator, Gabby Logan, acting as comperes, it was every inch the stellar event.

Summing up the judges commented: "Landscaping, alongside design, is a key tenet of the business...A brick and flint wall here, park railings

there, a hedge, a fence – Fleur's landscaping approach is the company's welcoming party." They also noted that Fleur's brochures were: "...exceptional, almost mini-tour guides."

What makes the success all the more impressive is that it was the first time Fleur had entered into the awards, with its entry featuring five East Anglian developments: Foundry Field in Burnham Market, Parishes in Weybourne, Greencroft in Blakeney and Sea Glass in Brancaster Staithe, with Fisher's Field in Risby, near Bury St Edmunds. Each collection showcased Fleur's commitment to the local community, with every home thoughtfully reflecting the local vernacular, while absorbing modern twists.

Based in Holt, Fleur specialises in creating beautiful properties in some of Norfolk and Suffolk's most desirable locations. Unusually for the industry,

the company is a design-led housebuilder and its vision is to produce homes that both enhance their surroundings and are truly lovely places to live too.

From building one-off bespoke homes and small collections, Fleur is now undertaking much larger developments with a number of major schemes in the pipeline. In terms of recent developments, it has completed the following projects:

- **Fisher's field, Risby, near Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk**

A collection of 20 homes (including six affordable units), offering 3,4 & 5 bedrooms, located centrally within Risby Village. Completed in early 2018, the 14 open-market homes were 90% sold within 16 weeks of the launch date, primarily due to the fact that the properties thoughtfully echo the local vernacular, with features including Suffolk-pitched roofs, decorative barge



boards, deep timber fascias and plenty of weatherboarding. Its success is such that St Edmundsbury Borough Council views Fisher's Field as a benchmark for other developers to follow. Councilor Susan Glossop, Cabinet Member for Planning and Growth at St Edmundsbury Borough Council, commented: "The Council places huge emphasis on the delivery of quality places and our planners worked very hard and closely with (Fleur Developments) to ensure that the final design of this development provides just that. As a consequence, Fishers Field is a very well-designed development with an attractive layout, well-designed buildings and a high-quality setting. All of which makes it a great place to live and an example for others in the industry to follow."

- **Northshore Place, Brancaster Staithe, Norfolk**

A development of 12 homes, (including two affordable homes) offering 2,3 & 4 bedrooms. Northshore Place is located a short walk from Brancaster Staithe harbour. Work commenced on the site in November 2018, but even before work had started Fleur had already sold seven off plan, with a great deal of interest in the remaining three open market homes. To sell this many off plan is testimony to the high quality of the homes Fleur builds and the excellent reputation it enjoys on the north Norfolk coast.

- **The Parishes, Weybourne, Norfolk**
Set in the heart of Weybourne and close to the Norfolk coast, this is a development of seven homes offering 2,3 and 4 bedrooms.
- **Greencroft, Blakeney, Norfolk**
A development comprising six individual homes and the

conversion of a Victorian house into two apartments, based in the centre of Blakeney, close to the quay. With a customer base that includes professional couples and families, early retirees and second home owners and in a market that is more discerning than ever, Fleur is finding that people are prepared to pay their asking prices because of the high quality of their product and the desirable site locations. This was underlined when it sold seven out of ten open market homes off-plan at its Northshore Place, Brancaster Staithe development.

In addition to the high demand for its homes due to their quality, the current dearth of housing within the wider market means that Fleur

looks well placed to continue developing as a business. "There are significantly more planning applications for much larger developments as a result of the Government's targets for new build delivery," outlines Juliette. "Housing associations are also starting to move into the open-market residential side of the business. Looking ahead we are aiming for growth in terms of units delivered without diluting our brand, while in the longer term we are determined to become the best medium-sized housebuilder in East Anglia."

Given its burgeoning reputation and its' recent award success, Fleur is certainly more than capable of achieving this ambitious objective in the coming years.



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