

NEW BUILD



Walk in the Parc

Craigmillar is all set for the green light, writes Janet Christie

Edinburgh's housing market may be suffering from the first chill winds of a cold snap but the phones at Parclife in the city's south-east were red-hot with buyers snapping up all appointments to reserve the first plots within 12 minutes when they were released.

Part of the £200 million 15-year transformation of Craigmillar, Parc will see more than 3,000 homes being built in what will be a new Green Quarter of the city, stretching eastward from Arthur's Seat to Fort Kinnaird. The first three phases of units have now been released, with properties at Wauchope, The Square and The Courtyard. Prices start from £99,950 for a mix of one to three-bedroom apartments and town houses.

Jim Kelly, Parclife's sales and marketing manager, says: "Parclife homes are different. We are building in an area which is about two miles from the city centre, on the southern edge of Arthur's Seat, yet is in the middle of huge swathes of green space and countryside. As part of an innovative regeneration programme, which will build and sustain a new, thriving community in the capital, Parclife is offering facilities unlike anything currently being developed in Edinburgh today."

Designed by architects Page Park, Austin Smith Lord, Hypostyle and Elder and Cannon, each phase will be different, reflecting a range of options and styles. In turn this will help each phase create its own community, with its own landscaping and gardens.

As Elder and Cannon says about its designs for part of The Square, "Our intention has been to provide individual houses that work with space and light. Based on a strong design philosophy we have created attractive, modern and energy-efficient homes. We have tried to design house layouts which give bright and airy rooms, with particular spaces in each house benefiting from increased headroom and generous glazing."

"The creation of 'homezones' will give pedestrians and residents priority over vehicles in areas where there will be no raised pavements or road signs, and communal courtyards will mean secure, shared green spaces for children to play in safety."

Potential buyers can now visit the sales and information centre and have a look at the three-bedroom show home that has been decorated by Julia Neustein of Interior Motives in acid green and grey, with walnut furniture. "We want viewers to realise that they can achieve a very high standard of finish within their own budget," she says.

"With no stamp duty, the properties represent some of the best value for money anywhere in the city, with the quality of homes being second to none," says Kelly.

While there is an abundance of open space at Parclife, with much of it being transformed into parks, river walkways, a new community woodland and arboretum, plus open woodland and a 15th

century castle, it is also close to the shops and amenities crucial to busy young professionals and families. Cameron Toll shopping centre is less than a mile away, as is Fort Kinnaird in the other direction, and Princes Street is a short bus-ride away. But there will also be a new town centre with shops and a town square serving the homes in this new quarter of the city.

Schools are also planned, with a new community high school for around 700 pupils and a library in the pipeline, while a £16m primary schools' joint campus at Wauchope Square for around 700 children has already been built, its name a reference to the estate from which the lands were bought to build the original houses in 1924. Designed by Elder and Cannon, the campus has a horseshoe-shaped central building and playground shared by both schools.

Existing roads and junctions on Niddrie Mains Road will be upgraded to serve the development, while public transport links will also be improved, making it easier to travel in and out of the city centre, and to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. Footpaths and crossings will also be improved and more than 250 new trees will help the whole area live up to its aspiration to be the capital's new Green Quarter.

For further information on the Parclife development, tel: 0845 220 5000, e-mail: parclife@rettie.co.uk or visit www.parclife.co.uk



The exterior of Parclife, above, and the show home's kitchen and living room, right