



Interior design bespoke to the client's needs

# Developing the dream

If you are thinking of property development, it is vital you speak to award-winning experts such as Westcoast Developments, or your dream may turn into a nightmare.  
By Steve Moody



Conception stage to finished project

With the housing market improving, low interest rates and the growth in the economy, people are again daring to dream of turning visions into stunning realities - coupled, of course, with a healthy profit.

The thing is, property development is a highly complex business, and just having a 'build it and they will come' mentality can be quite naive. The result of wrong decision-making, even with the strengthening economy and ever-increasing house prices, isn't always enough to save them. The dream has turned into a nightmare.

So it is vital that you seek expert help, and Graham Heffer's team at Westcoast Developments is exactly that: he has put together a group of people who, as he says 'have been there, done that and have a track record of succeeding'.

His company has won numerous awards for its stylish, considered and successful coastal and park homes in the area and understands precisely what pitfalls to avoid and where profit can be made.

He says: "Understandably people are gaining increasing financial confidence and are attracted once again to property development in either the domestic or commercial sectors.

"You simply need to know how to go about it because if you get it wrong, the time and money wasted could be harrowing."

Graham explains: "I liken the whole thing to a snakes and ladders game: two steps forward, one back. The trick is to understand where the ladders are, and know when there's a snake just around the corner!

"This property may well be your dream home, part of a development portfolio, an investment or joint venture. Unfortunately, some launch into the property development market ill-equipped, ill-informed and inexperienced, and at the end, although they think they have been saved because they make a return on the investment, in fact ►



Award-winning developments



Detailed drawing for planning approval

it is just the strengthening economic situation, so in real terms they haven't. The real skill of development is to make a healthy profit irrespective of house prices rising, and that's where our experts come in.

"The problem is that would-be developers are often unaware of the costs and time that can be incurred during this complex journey from the initial 'roll of the dice' through to successful completion. Unforeseen pitfalls, bad advice or inexperience can be extremely costly.

"At the very outset, before anything else gets done, there must be an accurate cost appraisal for funding. If you choose to use your own funding, you must put that cost into the appraisal too.

"This is imperative. Every scenario is different and capital for development can be achieved from a number of sources such as savings, mortgages, loans and so on. But the source of the money, and the cost of sourcing that money, must be factored into the whole project."

Westcoast Developments have been approached by individuals and companies for their help and expertise during the property development process.

Graham says: "We are able to offer a comprehensive range of services from finding sites, preparation of architects' drawings, planning application submission and monitoring services, to checking site internal and external layouts including bathrooms and kitchens. We also provide project management throughout construction of new build and refurbishment projects, full interior design packages, marketing project appraisals, marketing, bank financing, external financing and so on."

For ease Graham has compiled Westcoast



Views over lagoon

Silver, Gold and Platinum packages to choose from. This enables clients to obtain the level of help they need to complete the project successfully. Westcoast can also tailor packages to a client's particular brief or alternatively put together a 'pay as you go' arrangement if they so wish.

In the end, a successful development is the result of partnerships, with the right decisions made, the right costs and margins achieved within the set timeframe. Firms such as Westcoast can help you do this effectively, turning that dream into a reality. ■

**Westcoast Developments**  
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## ARE YOU READY TO DEVELOP?

Can you provide the following skills throughout the project yourself? If not, it might be worth bringing in professional help to see the project through to completion. Graham Heffer of Westcoast Developments highlights some of the fundamental building blocks for successful development.

Can you:

- Liaise with clients to identify their development/site requirements.
- Locate and identify a potential development site.
- Negotiate the purchase price of development sites.
- Instruct and liaise with architects and engineers to ensure designs meet the client's requirements.
- Deal with local authorities and county councils in relation to planning, highways, building regulations, etc.
- Take advantage of trade/discounted rates with suppliers and professionals.
- Liaise with the construction firm throughout the build – regular meetings with project surveyor, site agents, contracts manager for the project.
- Deal with solicitors in relation to the purchase and sales of sites/completed units.
- Liaise with professional consultants.
- Set project cost and programme constraints.
- Liaise with and oversee agents through the sales and marketing process.
- Prepare marketing strategies and link them in with the selling agents.
- Provide after-sales service to new property owners.
- Provide project management duties throughout the project.
- Early marketing to encourage off-plan sales and possible stamp duty savings.
- Dispose of any undeveloped sites.



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