

‘Urban garden’ provides home for 71-unit infill housing scheme

Bryden Wood have completed a £14 million 71-unit housing scheme in Forest Hill, South London. Formed of nine cedar-clad buildings on a 8270sqm site, Churchwood Gardens is a rental-only development focused on sustainable, modern living integrated within a refurbished landscaped garden.

Previously a backlands site, Bryden Wood developed a design inspired by the plot’s unusual sloped gradient and potential for green spaces. The scheme sits neatly within the stepped infill site and in close proximity to the new garden by Davis Landscape Architecture.

Given that the site sits within a typical Victorian terrace, local residents were concerned about a new development’s effect on it’s traditional character. Bryden Wood purposefully built units to the proportions of neighbouring homes, meaning preservation of original sightlines and privacy for both new and old occupants alike. The design also means that Churchwood Gardens, despite its size, is virtually hidden from sightlines of the streets.

All units at Churchwood Gardens are designed to the principles of the National Housing Federation’s good practice guide, the London Plan requirements. This results in generously spaced interiors of apartments, treated to rich amounts of light from full-height windows in living space and bedrooms, and decking and balconies that open out onto the landscape of site. These spaces promote further integration with the external spaces to occupants, without sacrificing privacy.

Red-timber Cedar cladding was used for units at Churchwood Gardens, chosen to create a soft texture and colour furthering the urban garden feeling of the overall site. Two distinct patterns were used to subtly demarcate between more open and private spaces, with cedar board used for open areas and cedar shingle for exteriors facing neighbouring properties.

Designed by Davis Landscape Architecture, the garden was created to serve the residents with something more than just outdoor areas. The leafy garden pairs relaxation spaces and a central glade alongside practical, green elements such as log structures and spaces for composting.

Churchwood Garden incorporates several components that increases the scheme’s sustainability, promotes biodiversity and reduces its impact on the environment: these include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, photovoltaic panels to generate ‘clean’ renewable electricity, and green roofs and improved built fabrics to converse energy usage.

Catering for not just local human population the design was additionally sensitive to the context of the site by allowing for flight paths and habitats of a nearby bat population to remain undisturbed.

Director of Bryden Wood, Paul O’Neill said of Churchwood Gardens *“Rental accommodation, especially in London, isn’t known for its character or quality. So with Churchwood Garden we had the opportunity to build a housing scheme that offered both. Though the site was a*

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challenge, by embracing it's unique aspects and working with a developer that wanted something beyond the norm, we've delivered housing with a tranquility and individuality for residents."

Lissa Napolitano of Loromah Estates LTD:

"Bryden Wood's expertise in the design and delivery of Churchwood Gardens was instrumental in the success of the project. Both their architecture and engineering teams were thorough, innovative and responsive to our needs and expectations of them. The feedback from residents has been fantastic and there is a real sense of integration and community with the site already."

Project Details

Client: Loromah Estates Ltd.

Size (sqm): Total GEA 8270 sqm

Start date: Sept 2016

Completion date: Dec. 2018

Cost: £14m

Team (Engineers, consultants etc):

Architect:	Bryden Wood
Structural and Civil:	Bryden Wood
Building services:	Bryden Wood
Principal Designer:	Pierce Hill Project Services
Landscape Architect:	Davis Landscape Architecture
Fire Engineer:	Jeremy Gardner Associates
Planning Consultant:	Frost Planning
Contractor:	Wicklow Projects

About Bryden Wood

We are a tech-led design consultancy made up of architects, analysts, software coders, engineers and industrial designers. Founded in 1995, Bryden Wood is the only organisation in the architecture sector to bring together such a broad range of specialisms with a single purpose: to transform the global construction industry.

Bryden Wood's vision is to close the gap between construction and manufacturing. To create a highly productive, digitally-led industry.

We are the UK leader in offsite and advanced construction techniques, and, in 2018, became one of very few architectural practices to ever win a Queen's Award for innovation that changes the fundamentals of design and construction.

Our company has grown rapidly in to a 200-person practice with blue-chip clients across a range of sectors.