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## 4,000 Homes And A Brand New Community Coming To West Ham

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There's much more to regeneration than simply building homes, as Berkeley explains about TwelveTrees Park in east London...



Credit: TwelveTrees Park (Berkeley)



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There are elements and principles at the heart of housebuilding which are universal, and others which change with the times. The core aspirations of build quality and a good location, which buyers have sought for generations, have been joined over time by the principles of placemaking – building communities and focusing on the health and wellbeing of both new and existing residents. Developments (and developers) are no longer just judged on bricks and mortar – each one has to pass the deeper tests of benefiting homeowners outside their four walls, as well as the local community as a whole.

There are various ways developers seek to achieve this. Their location, amenities and, most of all, landscaping can all play a part in making the modern development as attractive as possible. One example of a development which is addressing each of these factors is Berkeley Group's 3,838-home project in West Ham, **TwelveTrees Park**, which **broke ground late last year**.

### A connection to nature

We know the importance of green space to buyers, but a recent paper published by the Royal Town and Planning Institute shows how this has accentuated over the past year. The Covid-19 pandemic has placed additional importance on proximity to green space for 49% of buyers, according to the report – with lockdown demonstrating that to many, even in major cities, natural features are now a necessity rather than a 'nice to have'.

Over half of the development at TwelveTrees Park is dedicated to green space, incorporating an abundance of trees, plants and flowers, designed to encourage wildlife to flourish, increasing biodiversity and offering a slice of nature in the capital for all to enjoy.



The largest element of this green space is the creation of a park for the local area, which at 4.5 acres will be the largest new WiFi-enabled park in London. Work has started on delivery of the park during the first phase of construction, so the first residents will be able to reap the benefits from the outset.

Sean Gavin, operations director at Berkeley South East London, said: "Our philosophy at **TwelveTrees Park** is to recognise the importance of outdoor space and access to nature in creating happier, healthier and more cohesive communities. The park is the jewel in the crown here, particularly with the commitment to make it completely WiFi enabled."





Accompanying the park will be an array of an additional green spaces throughout the development, with the aim of encouraging active, outdoor lifestyles and providing places to relax, reflect and restore. There is a focus on diversity in these plans, rather than just leaving sections of the land without buildings. A sensory garden, water feature, sculptures, an orchard, meadow and woodland all feature as part of proposals for the development, in addition to plans for beehives – leaving a variety of options for locals to connect with nature and the outdoors. Elsewhere, the proximity to existing parks such as Victoria and Greenwich add further benefits.

Gavin added: “We wanted to offer something for everyone. The park is vital as a general community resource to offer a place for people to connect and socialise – with different aspects of the park that will suit different people, at different times of the day.

### **A vibrant community**

There is also a lot to be said for having amenities right on your doorstep, providing convenient entertainment for new and existing residents while encouraging others to come in from outside, once restrictions are lifted. Over 240,000 sq ft of space, the equivalent of 65 tennis courts, has been earmarked for non-residential use at TwelveTrees Park – ranging from the parks and green spaces to shops, cafés, bars and leisure facilities.

There will be dedicated sports and games areas, as well as children’s play spaces and a trim trail to encourage outdoor, active lifestyles from a young age, and bring residents together with the wider community. There will also be a number of maker-space studios available to rent by local artists and creatives to pursue their passions.





This focus on creating buzzing public spaces, such as a piazza and central square which will be home to seasonal markets, coffee stalls and street food vendors, is a growing theme of today's ambitious developments. Another open space, 'The Hub' will provide a central community space for the development – a place for friends and neighbours to meet, catch up and hold events. It signifies Berkeley's commitment to creating new community assets for everyone to enjoy and to stitching the development into the local area.

Gavin said: "We have tried to design **TwelveTrees** with new and existing residents in mind. New developments have to make their mark on the existing community without overwhelming it – there's a balance to be found in complementing what the area currently has with the addition of new amenities for everyone to enjoy.

"We want to encourage everyone to come outside and socialise in and around TwelveTrees Park, so have sought to provide the spaces and facilities to allow people to connect easily."



part of work to enhance the existing community Berkeley has also come to an agreement to provide a new home for East London Science School – with a state-of-the-art facility for 1,000 pupils including a sports hall, lecture theatre and specially designed 1.5 acre science garden. These facilities will also be made accessible for local residents, with the garden offering the dual benefits of providing a space for children to play, as well as providing educational areas including an outdoor lab and physics garden.

### **Buying more than walls**

If developers are doing their jobs right, buyers of new builds are no longer just purchasing a home. Their surroundings should be conducive to a healthy and happy lifestyle, with a design that truly puts community and wellbeing at its heart. TwelveTrees Park seeks to epitomise this through the delivery of large amounts of green and communal spaces stitched into the vast urban setting of East London. In this way it seeks to offer the best of both worlds – providing the proximity to both work and play which buyers need while focusing on the principles of placemaking.

Prices for the current homes for sale at TwelveTrees Park start at £485,000. [Find out more from Berkeley.](#)