



The review

Building a sustainable future

We seek to provide the skills, communities and innovations to help people live their best lives. Our aim is to build better homes in thriving locations, while focusing on initiatives that will create sustainable lifestyles that exceed our customers' expectations.



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APPOINTMENT

Larkfleet Group appoints new Chief Executive to drive growth

Larkfleet Group has appointed a new Chief Executive as it prepares to triple in size over the next five years.

He replaces Karl Hick, the Founder of Larkfleet Group – owner of award-winning Larkfleet Homes and Allison Homes – who will step up to the position of Chairman.

Mr Anderson said: “I am delighted to have been appointed to this exciting role. Working closely with Karl and the team, my aim is to build on the core strengths that already exist in the group to help drive performance and quality and expand Larkfleet into a premier, customer-focused nationwide home builder.

“I will build on Karl’s excellent reputation for achieving an engaged workforce, with core values, and a culture of employee and customer wellbeing. These are essential goals for evolving

“My aim is to expand Larkfleet into a premier, customer-focused nationwide home builder.”

and agile businesses in today’s highly competitive marketplace.”

Mr Anderson has wide ranging experience covering all aspects of general management in housebuilding and the residential development sector, land acquisition, mixed use property development, and corporate turnaround and recovery, throughout the UK.

He spent the last 10 years at FTSE 250 Kier Group where he was most recently executive director responsible for the group’s home building business

Kier Living. Prior to that he held various senior positions including CEO of Princegate Estates Plc, Managing Director of Taywood Lifestyle Homes (part of the Taylor Woodrow Group) and Group Sales and Marketing Director, Taylor Woodrow Group.



Mr Hick said: “I am thrilled to have appointed a CEO of John’s calibre. His vast experience, in director level roles makes him the ideal candidate to take Larkfleet Group from a successful regional housebuilder, to an outstanding national home builder. We are looking to take the company into new regions, recruiting new teams – with our focus remaining firmly on the customer.

“John will focus on the housebuilding side of the business, and I will continue to oversee the housing and growth and support John in achieving these goals. I will also continue to be responsible for the sustainable and R&D aspects of the group’s activities, given the government’s climate change targets.

“This is a hugely exciting time for Larkfleet Group and we are looking forward to taking our architect-designed, energy efficient homes to the whole of the UK. In spite of the pandemic, we are looking to grow substantially over the next 10 years. This will be through mixed tenure developments and affordable housing, but our mission remains the same – to produce high quality sustainable developments using innovative technology and construction methods, delivered to exceed our customers’ expectations.”

John Anderson
Larkfleet Group CEO

Larkfleet Group leads industry talks at House of Commons

Larkfleet Group recently held another of its very successful Parliamentary dinners at the House of Commons, hosted by the MP for Sleaford & North Hykeham Dr Caroline Johnson.

Chaired by Larkfleet Group’s Chairman Karl Hick, in one of the Commons’ splendid dining rooms beside the River Thames – before the government’s latest advice on social distancing took effect – more than 20 guests enjoyed a three course meal before discussing a wide range of topics related to the housing sector, including the latest developments in the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, current government levels of support for house building and the broader construction industry landscape post-Brexit, with a focus on Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire.

Mr Hick said: “These brainstorming sessions, with some of the best minds in the industry are always insightful and informative. By collaborating in this way, each of us learns a huge amount that’s applicable to what we do. I’ve certainly come away with many new ideas for Larkfleet Group which is always looking for new and innovative ways to create fantastic new homes with a true community feel.”

The guests included Councillor Kelham Cooke, the Leader of South Kesteven District Council and Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald, the Deputy Leader of Peterborough City Council, along with a number of Larkfleet’s key clients and senior executives.

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Karl Hick
Larkfleet Group of Companies



Larkfleet urges government to extend support for construction

The Chairman of the Larkfleet Group of Companies is supporting the Home Builders Federation (HBF) in its calls for the government to do more to help housebuilders through the coronavirus crisis.

HBF is in constant dialogue with ministers, discussing matters such as how its members can access recently announced financial schemes and the need for existing planning permissions to be extended by 12 months.

Stewart Baseley, HBF's Executive Chairman, wrote to Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick to set out HBF's wishes on various matters including planning consents and Section 106 payment deferrals.

Looking ahead to a post-Covid recovery, the HBF said: "Housebuilding can play a key part in helping the UK's long-term recovery by generating benefits throughout the economy. The housing market may take some time to recover from this shock but, in the long term we want to avoid a major impact on our efforts to address the country's housing shortage."

Larkfleet Chairman Karl Hick said the government must "play its part" in aiding the industry's return to economic activity.

He added: "The chancellor is only too aware that the construction industry is a big contributor to the UK economy. In 2018, the construction sector (commercial and housing combined) contributed £117 billion to the UK economy.

"Events of the past few weeks have clearly shown that humanity is not 'in charge' of its own destiny. But as we work our way through the crisis, we must get back to normal economic activity as swiftly as possible.

"At Larkfleet, we will take a lead in this. But we also look to government to play its part."

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Karl Hick
Larkfleet Group of Companies

Larkfleet launches Graduate Programme

As a business, the Larkfleet Group of Companies are committed to welcoming new university graduates into the team and giving them first-hand learning opportunities about the many functions and operations involved in the company. The new, two year Graduate Programme aims to do exactly this, allowing these individuals to develop their skills before embarking on a meaningful career with Larkfleet Group.

Every graduate who enters the programme will undertake projects with various departments so that they may build a comprehensive understanding in every aspect of the business. They will also have access to tutorials and support from across the Larkfleet Group team.

Upon joining the programme, the graduate will be given a mentor from the Leadership Team. This mentor will offer guidance throughout the two years, with a bi-monthly review to track the progress each graduate is making and define future objectives. The graduate will also have a Workplace Sponsor in each department they work in, who will manage them and make sure they are getting the experience they need.

The Larkfleet Group programme will enable each graduate to be allocated Special Projects to enhance their skills alongside their normal training. The first two graduates embarking on the programme will be **Alfie Hick**, son of Karl Hick and **James Winfield** who start in September 2020.

The programme aims to positively benefit graduates looking to build their expertise in the industry, as well as introduce new talent into the company to be nurtured. It will also provide a stepping stone to any graduate wishing to start a career with the Larkfleet Group.



DEVELOPMENTS

Larkfleet Homes restarts construction in line with government guidelines

Larkfleet Homes reopened some of its construction sites and show homes in England after reviewing its safety measures in line with the latest government advice.

Larkfleet Homes developed a new set of site protocols for staff, contractors and suppliers to ensure its construction sites and sales suites are safe and comply with strict social distancing rules.



“Our new guidelines are fully compliant with government public health guidance and are being strictly enforced by site managers.”

Karl Hick
Larkfleet Group of Companies

The sites that have reopened across Lincolnshire and Rutland include:

Deeping Meadow in Market Deeping,
Farriers Reach in Oakham,
Pinchbeck Fields near Spalding,
Boston Gate in Boston,
Nettleham Chase near Nettleham.

In Cambridgeshire, work has restarted at:
Whittlesey Green in Whittlesey
Thorney Meadows in Cambridgeshire

In Northamptonshire work is again underway at:

Gretton Valley near Corby
Oakley Rise in Corby



Deeping Meadow development by Larkfleet Homes at Market Deeping, Peterborough.

Larkfleet welcomes family recruits

Family has always been at the heart of the Larkfleet Group: from placing families in their dream homes to embodying the family values of responsibility, teamwork and support in our operations. However, family has taken an increased focus in recent months as the company has welcomed a number of relatives into the team.

Alfie Hick, son of Chairman Karl Hick, will be joining the company's new Graduate Programme, in which he will spend the next two years gaining experience across the business's many functions and departments.

Tommy Sweeney, son of Quality Manager **Claire Sweeney**, is currently undertaking a course in Forklift Driving to develop his construction skills within the company. Claire herself is the daughter of Helen Hick, Managing Director & Group HR Director, marking the third generation of the family entering the company.

With the increased presence of family at Larkfleet, the company looks forward to continue to embody its family centric values and welcome new recruits – related and otherwise – to the growing Larkfleet team.

We can't forget the company mascot too - **Hugo!**



Larkfleet CEO warns funding issues and skills gap could derail government's housing targets

Industry and government need to tackle the skills gap in construction and unlock funding constraints if plans to speed up home building are to be effective.

The government has published the most radical overhaul of the English planning system in a generation, in a move to accelerate the delivery of urgently needed new homes. Housing Minister Robert Jenrick said reforms in the Planning for the Future white paper would produce high quality, sustainable homes on land labelled for growth, renewal or protection.

Housing ministers claimed the planning overhaul is intended to help SME housebuilders, with plans to make the

housing industry "more diverse and competitive to drive delivery and higher standards".

Larkfleet CEO John Anderson said: "These proposals are certainly a positive step forward and they underpin how serious the government is about tackling the barriers that are holding back the housing market.

"The reforms may also provide a boost for SME housebuilders, but there remains the huge hurdle of funding for the SME market which must be addressed. The government and Homes England are making all the right noises, but we need to encourage lenders to increase the

availability of higher LTC (loan to cost ratio) debt – perhaps by introducing government-backed indemnities for lenders."

Mr Anderson also raised concerns about the continuing skills gap housebuilders are facing.

He said: "If we are to accelerate housing delivery, we must also have a solution for the severe shortage of skilled construction workers to meet the government's housing target. The new immigration policy will inevitably restrict the skills needed to supplement our homegrown skills, so we need to invest in education and training for both technical and non-technical construction skills.

"I welcome many aspects of the proposals, especially the presumption for development in designated growth areas, the simplification of Local Plans and the speeding up of the decision making process.

"These reforms are long overdue. We urgently need a planning system that is agile, transparent and fit for purpose for present and future generations.

"However, it will be impossible for SME housebuilders to increase their development schedules without a serious review of how new projects can be funded and how they can be built given the acute shortage of construction workers."

The consultation on the housing ministry's wide-ranging measures closes on October 29.

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John Anderson
Larkfleet CEO



Politicians and business leaders plan a way forward for housebuilders following Covid-19

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More than 70 business leaders and construction industry professionals, from across the Midlands and East of England, met at a virtual conference to discuss the future of housebuilding in the wake of Covid-19.

The event – titled ‘Covid-19 – meeting the challenges of housebuilding recovery’ – was hosted by The Larkfleet Group of Companies, which includes housebuilders Larkfleet Homes and Allison Homes.

Speakers at the event – now in its fifth year – included Larkfleet Group Chairman **Karl Hick**, **Andrew Lewer** MBE, MP for Northampton South, **Ben Rudd**, Associate Director, Development, at Savills, and **Kelham Cooke**, the Leader of South Kesteven District Council.

The conference, held on 22 July, attracted delegates from the public and private housing sectors, including planners, estate agents, surveyors, builders and developers.

In a series of presentations and discussion sessions, the conference examined the recovery challenges facing the housebuilding industry. Topics discussed included the proposed changes to the planning system, how district councils can assist with the delivery of housing targets and the state of the land market.

Karl Hick opened by raising several important issues. He said: “The government has been clear that recovery in the construction industry is fundamental in terms of boosting the economy, providing jobs and delivering new homes.

“We welcome the Business and Planning Bill, including measures to extend planning permission deadlines so that projects put on hold because of Covid-19 can still be delivered, as well as the new flexible working hours on construction sites to enable us to get our teams back to work safely.



“However, we need to work together to urge the government to extend the Help to Buy scheme. It would be fair to say 80 per cent of sales relate to HTB, so sales would drop to 20 per cent without it. This would be disastrous for the housebuilding industry, the economy and people desperate to buy a new home – and would derail the government’s recovery plans.

“The government also needs to help SME builders to deliver the energy-saving initiatives set out in the Future Homes Standard to reduce carbon emissions from new buildings. This is a tricky one for me. Larkfleet Homes is probably the most sustainable builder in the UK, but we struggle to deliver some of the environmental initiatives because sale values would not cover the additional costs. It is a complicated issue as housebuilders in some areas of the UK will be able to afford it, because of land and house values.”

Andrew Lewer also chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group for SME House Builders, which was set up to look at the issues home builders are facing, via the planning process, in delivering the government’s target of 300,000 new houses a year. It aims to provide answers to parliament and government on how England can provide more and better new homes, primarily through SME builders and developers.

He said: “Lobbying by the big builders is focused on them, so SME housebuilders need their own voice. We have nearly 200 participants from all over the country coming to parliamentary meetings, so we are gathering a body of evidence from the people who are actually involved in delivering housing.

“We have just published a report on ways to improve the planning system in the UK, and this will be put to ministers in terms of detailed recommendations.”

Cllr Kelham Cooke, Leader of South Kesteven District Council said: “In January, we adopted the South Kesteven Local Plan, which set out the need to deliver an average of 650 homes a year by 2036 – or 14,000 homes within that period. This represents

an increase of nearly 25% of homes in our district. Clearly this is an immense challenge, but it is one I am determined to meet.

“However, we can’t do this alone. As a partner, we bring to the table the ability to create the right environment within which you can thrive and prosper. You bring to the table your considerable skills, knowledge, and expertise to turn the opportunity we create into reality.”

Ben Rudd from Savills said that post-lockdown “many housebuilders have been trying to do land sales with a ‘Covid clause’, allowing them to terminate if conditions worsen during the buying stage.

“Most builders have restarted construction, though generally at a slower pace because of Covid restrictions. This will slow the pace of delivery of homes to the market but could protect prices.”

Sam Hart, Director of Sales at Larkfleet Homes, said: “The market has held up and we’ve seen a bounce-back in inquiries and reservations. Whether this will continue, we will have to see. We need Help to Buy to be extended. This initiative is not just about first-time buyers, but second-timers too. Help to Buy will be the key driver to keep the market stable so that we can continue delivering homes for all.”

Karl Hick concluded the conference by referencing further challenges facing the housebuilding industry.

He said: “I think one of the issues, as we come into Brexit is that some reports said it would cost up to £200 billion to manage the divorce and that would have been possible with the funding we had pre-Covid. But now that we have a massive shortfall as a result of coronavirus, does the government borrow another £200 billion? What will be the repercussions of the Chinese dispute for the UK economy? Combined with coronavirus, these factors mean we have a perfect storm coming and it is a big concern.”

He added that national, globally-acclaimed projects such as HS2 and the expansion of Heathrow airport are “massively important to keep UK PLC stable internally and open for business externally”.

Larkfleet Group appoints new Chief Financial Officer and makes series of senior promotions in its home building divisions

Larkfleet Group has appointed Alastair Gordon-Stewart to the position of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in a move to help prepare the Lincolnshire-based business for growth.

Mr Gordon-Stewart qualified as a chartered accountant at KPMG London, before moving to FTSE 250 contractor Kier Group where he held a number of senior finance roles including Finance Director at both Kier Property and Kier Living.

During his time at Kier Group he managed a housing and property development investment portfolio of £1 billion and helped raise £0.5 billion of development finance on this portfolio.

Alastair said: "I'm absolutely delighted to join Larkfleet Group. It is a company that I believe has huge potential for medium and long term growth."



"It is a pleasure to join the group's talented team and to help steer the company through its next phase of expansion."

Karl Hick, the Founder of Larkfleet Group, said: "I am delighted to welcome Alastair to the position of CFO. He brings a wealth of property and finance experience, which will prove invaluable as we prepare to fully reopen our business and proceed with our many planned housing developments once lockdown has been fully lifted."

"It is a pleasure to join the group's talented team and to help steer the company through its next phase of expansion."

Alastair Gordon-Stewart
Larkfleet Homes Chief Financial Officer

<p>Leigh Wagg has been promoted to Construction Director, Larkfleet Homes Norfolk & Suffolk.</p>	<p>Lee Pittam becomes Director of Technical, Larkfleet Homes.</p>	<p>Paul Pearson has been promoted to Director of Commercial, Larkfleet Homes.</p>
<p>Mr Wagg is also supporting Larkfleet Homes as Acting Construction Director prior to the launch of the first site in the Norfolk & Suffolk division.</p> <p>Mr Wagg said: "I'm very excited about my new role. I worked my way up from labourer to construction manager during my time at Persimmon Homes, grew my health and safety and site planning knowledge at Avant Homes and since joining Larkfleet Homes my responsibilities have grown to include setting targets, objectives and responsibilities for all the staff in my team.</p> <p>"My new role also means that I am now responsible for recommending policy and procedure improvements and reporting to clients and board members on project progress. It's a great step forward for my career at Larkfleet Homes and I'm delighted to have been given the opportunity."</p>	<p>Mr Pittam said: "I joined Larkfleet in 2016 to further my career in the housebuilding industry and into management. The prospect of joining a firm where my 20 years' experience and expertise in the construction industry could be passed on to others, and where I could grow my management skills, were key factors in my decision to join Larkfleet.</p> <p>"My previous experience in civil and structural engineering in residential, commercial and industrial sectors has allowed me to gain the necessary experience to problem solve and value engineer our developments to provide cost effective designs and innovations.</p> <p>"In my new role I will be responsible for the management of the technical department. The challenge of educating and training the next generation of technical staff is a key element of the job role that appeals to me."</p>	<p>Mr Pearson said: "I will now be overseeing the commercial activities of the Larkfleet Homes & Allison Homes developments from the Bourne head office. This will involve everything from land appraisals through to the awarding of new development orders, the building of effective relationships with the suppliers and subcontractors to understand their perspectives and to use the knowledge and relationships to strengthen our commercial position."</p> <hr/> <p>Mr Hick added: "The appointment of a new CEO and CFO as well as several senior level promotions consolidates our already strong team and puts us in a position of strength."</p>

Larkfleet welcomes campaign for affordable homes

The National Housing Federation launched its Homes at the Heart campaign in early July, urging the government to put social housing at the centre of its economic recovery plan.

The campaign is supported by more than 60 housing groups, charities, banks and thinktanks. They argue that the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown has underlined the need for high quality, well-designed and affordable homes. This will be a major driver of economic recovery as every pound spent by the government on building new social homes generates at least £5 in local economies across the country, the federation said.

The NHF has suggested that the government earmarks "up to £3bn of the

recently announced £12.2bn affordable homes budget to support the short-term recovery". This would be used to fund additional flexibilities in the current grant programmes and extend the existing Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme for an additional year to 2022, with the same conditions as the current programme, the federation added.

Karl Hick, said: "We warmly welcome the NHF's latest campaign. The housebuilding industry drives not only economic growth, but also provides much-needed housing to support sustainable communities.

"The provision of shared ownership and affordable homes is a crucial part of the industry as these tenures account for a significant proportion of new-build sales – to housing associations and private buyers.

"It is also critical for the housebuilding industry that the government extends its Help to Buy initiative, which lends purchasers up to 20 per cent of the cost of a newly built home – with as little as a 5 per cent deposit. This initiative has helped hundreds of thousands of people to buy

well designed, good quality new-builds such as those built by Larkfleet Homes.

"The existing HTB scheme will be restricted to first-time buyers from April 2021 and includes regional property price caps that will weaken its effectiveness, given the severe economic conditions.

"Around 80 per cent of present sales relate to HTB, so if Help to Buy is phased out, as is currently planned, the market for newly built homes will fall off a cliff, housebuilders will go bust, and thousands of jobs will be lost. This would spell disaster for both the national and local economies, exacerbate the housing crisis and see communities fall apart.

"It is important to remember that the health of the housebuilding market is directly linked to the delivery of affordable homes. If sales fall away and housebuilders can't afford to bring developments to the market – which include allocations for affordable homes – then opportunities for building this much-needed housing will be scarce. If sites can't be started, then the government will have nowhere to spend its affordable housing budget, and its targets won't be met.

"We must do everything we can to avert this looming disaster, both for the market and social housing delivery."

"The housebuilding industry drives not only economic growth, but also provides much-needed housing to support sustainable communities."

Karl Hick
Larkfleet Group of Companies

Larkfleet Homes gets thumbs up for Moulton Chapel housing development

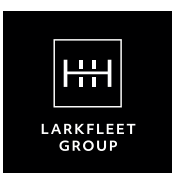
Planners approved Larkfleet Homes' proposal for 86 homes on land off Roman Road in Moulton Chapel, in the South Holland district of Lincolnshire.

The development will comprise eight two-bed, 35 three-bed, 38 four-bed and five five-bed homes, including a range of affordable housing.

Larkfleet Homes' Planning Manager Hannah Guy said: "We are delighted to have received approval for this development. We are working with the council on Section 106 donations and an archaeological survey that has to be carried out as part of the planning permission."

"We are delighted to have received approval for this development."

Hannah Guy
Planning Manager at Larkfleet Homes



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