



Riverstone Fulham



Elysian Landsby

RETIRE TO WHERE *the sun never sets*

Jane Slade talks to CEOs of some of the UK's most luxurious later-living schemes. They are confident of a bright and vibrant future

Managing care needs and age-related illnesses means prioritising wellbeing argues Jamie Bunce, CEO of Inspired Villages

“One of my happiest memories before the pandemic was watching my 15-year-old son at the annual cricket match at Great Alne Park standing at the crease with an 85-year-old resident who had not held a bat in 40 years.

It was such a delight to see these two chaps playing together. Enjoying simple pleasures. I could see the older resident's biological age reducing before my eyes. He was having such fun. So was my son. They have even kept in

touch and are now friends on Facebook.

We have four pillars of wellbeing at Inspired Villages; physical, mental, social and financial. If you create a strategy around those pillars, you can match people's individual needs and demands and keep them well.

It allows us to do wonderful things and excites me as we do transform people's lives. For example, we have people swimming who have not swum for 30 years.

It's really important to have wellness facilities at our villages. They prevent people getting ill and feeling lonely. Residents can create their own fitness and wellbeing programmes with our wellness navigators.

Keeping connected is vital for people's wellbeing. Older people are open to learning different ways to connect – it keeps them mentally agile. Our virtual village centre and online portals have been lifelines.

We all miss hand holding. But we have been able to create safe environments so human contact can be maintained even at a distance.

We opened an outside amphitheatre in the summer to stage music events.



Lifestory Pegasus Newcastle

We have a horticulturist to make the most of our gardens and design areas where people can connect even at a distance.

We have learned to connect with the wider community too.

Last year we launched Inspired Friendships, which enables our residents to meet and socialise with people outside the village. It's been a real success and we will plan to expand it.

As we come out of this pandemic I would like to help residents share their life stories on a video for their families. Like a letter – it's there for ever."

www.inspiredvillages.co.uk operates seven high-end developments and is on track to build 2,500 luxury homes in the next six years.

The secret to appealing to the affluent young-at-heart lies in delivering the Greek concept of hospitality, 'love and attention', declares Gavin Stein, CEO of Elysian Residences

"People are looking for a special feeling – that feeling they get when they travel to places that produce intangible magic.

Of course, we are focussed on delivering a first-class product - an environment where we can tailor everything around our homeowners' preferences, needs, wants and dreams.

But we are also focussed on giving each homeowner that feeling that they are individually unique, respected, and listened to.

So, when I think how our communities should be in

the future – they must respond to the individual needs of our customers. As they change so should our response.

In other parts of the economy, we are seeing things increasingly individualised and that is the case for us.

We understand what matters to our customers and it's not because they are old – but because they are discerning individuals.

They want choice.

At the Landsby, our development in Stanmore, our owners wanted an area dedicated to playing the card game Bridge. It was not something we anticipated but we provided it because we can tailor spaces to what our customers want.

The other thing we can do is be a focal point for connection with the local community, by providing space for charity board meetings, hosting events.

Each development is about optimising its environment. The Oren, our other London scheme in Hampstead is designed for those who want to be in the heart of the city and have no intention of growing old."

People will sense a difference at our communities – a sophistication they won't expect, and a level of service they are not used to.

Our job is to continue to reinvest the communities. Future proofing them as much as we can.

There are systems we can install that people wouldn't be able to afford themselves individually.



Elysian Hampstead

We may build in different locations in the future - places that are not dependent on the surrounding economy.

The retail environment will change. Cities will bounce back in a different guise.

What we are providing is needed even more than it was pre Covid - because we all need to be social, active, and engaged.

Our developments have different aesthetics but the same feeling – one that takes your breath away and offers a grandeur that inspires people to stand a bit taller.

www.elysianresidences.co.uk has three stunning developments with plans to build more over the next decade

The key to innovative property design and advanced technology is to focus on detail and space suggests Jason Leek, CEO of Riverstone Living

"The critical part of designing beautiful apartments for over 65s is embedding age-appropriate features and care offerings that you don't see.

We have designed everything from scratch so can incorporate all the layouts and facilities that we want. The restaurant and bar will be open to the public but other facilities such as the clubroom, library, cinema, spa pool and gym kept private for residents.

These are large developments - 161 apartments in Fulham and 190 in Kensington - designed in a modern, classic style with the feel of owning a lovely home in a private members club.

Every apartment will have a balcony or outside space – and Chelsea Flower Show designer Andy Sturgeon is curating beautiful community gardens.

Fast broadband is essential. Many older people are

technologically capable and interested – but you have to make sure it's suitable for residents with poor eyesight and mobility.

We are future-proofing people's lives but also offering them choice.

Technology is good if it makes life easier and is easy to operate. But it's just as fine if people want to ring the concierge or General Manager. The critical thing is making sure the building embeds the infrastructure to build on future technologies and future capability.

There will be a private cinema at each development and a multi-activity space where we can live-stream performances and host our own live events.

Covid has got people more familiar with accessing culture online – but as they get older and find it harder getting out – we have the technology to bring things to them.

Our attention to detail not only looks at the lifestyles of our residents but how they want to live, which involves the integration of care and how they want to incorporate this into their daily lives.

Big developments allow for a range of activities. So, for example we will have an indoor golf simulator – so you can play 18 holes at Pebble Beach without leaving London.

www.riverstoneliving.com has two developments opening in early 2022.

Mark Dickinson, CEO of Lifestory, claims that retirees no longer choose between 'town or county' but want to live in beautiful locations connected to a local community.

"It's difficult to think of something we have built in a town that isn't connected to the country in some way.



Inspired Villages Great Alne Park

“A blend is what our customers are after, all our communities are within a 10 – 15 minute walk from the nearest village or town whilst also being close to green outdoor space, beaches or woodlands. People want the best of both worlds, not wholly town or country.

They are not looking to tuck themselves away. They want a downsize move to a new home but remain attached to the wider community.

We hear about people wanting to leave cities but it’s not the social phenomena we are experiencing. What we see is people moving because it’s where they have always wanted to move to. That is the driver.

People move to the Cotswolds, for example, because they have always wanted to live there. We also see people wanting to remain in London because that’s where their friends live.

We are here to service choice – in the town or country.

One thing we are seeing, is the changing role of local High Streets which I think will become more locally focused over time. I am a Liverpoolian and I remember going into Crosby with my grandmother and all the shopkeepers greeted her as Mrs Dickinson. It all felt very connected and service motivated, something valued and respected and likely to return I believe.

We know that where we have created new communities, we have been able to support the existing High Street. We believe the later living customer should be better valued by local political leaders and planners as they set about regenerating our towns and cities.

Regardless of city or county locations, we create a mixture of communities, some have restaurants which we also open to the public.

We don’t provide extra care. We are about independent living. Whether renting or buying, we pride ourselves on not having event fees or complex financial arrangements.

We see our future as creating later-living homes next to traditional homes – with young living next to old and having lots of different offerings on site.

Older people move to connect with friends and family – if they can do that and move somewhere beautiful with amenities close by that would be their dream fulfilled.

www.lifestory.group comprises two brands Pegasus, which has 30 high-end communities across the UK, and Renaissance which has 20.

Jane Slade is founder and director of the retirement property website Retiremove.co.uk