

Black Friday property: buyers queue overnight for west London studio flats

Buyers snap up 215 flats in just three hours - at a rate of £335,000 a minute

By Sarah Coles, Nov 6, 2015

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A Hounslow development promising tiny studio flats from £199,000 set a new record by selling 215 flats in just three hours - at a rate of £335,000 a minute. People even queued overnight to be first in line to [snap one up](#). If ever you needed a sign that the [London property market](#) had gone round the twist, this is surely it.

Hopeful buyers weren't put off by the rain, or by the fact that the properties won't be built for another two years. They weren't even concerned about the scale of the new flats - which will be well-appointed but tiny.

They were the brainchild of Galliard Homes, which is targeting first time buyers with a range of small and 'affordable homes' offering either one bedroom or studio living. Prices range from £199,000 to £315,000.

Is this wise?

The idea behind the development was to fill the gap in the market for properties costing around the average price of a property in the UK. The company recognised that people are willing to make enormous compromises on size in order to afford something in the capital. Clearly the speed of the sales indicates the success of this approach from the company's point of view.

For buyers, on the one hand, there's sound logic behind the purchases. A new report has predicted that prices in London will rise another 20% over the next five years. Getting a foot on the very bottom rung of that ladder means buyers will see their home rise in value — giving them more equity with which to buy their next property - rather than watching the whole ladder move further and further out of sight.

However, buyers would do well to remember that house prices can go down as well as up - even in London. When prices fall, those who made huge compromises at the top of the market see their investment fall hardest. UBS recently named London and Hong Kong as the cities most at risk from a house price bubble. It said in a statement: "We advise caution given the risk of a price correction should the fundamentals for real-estate investment deteriorate."

And waiting overnight in the rain in order to snap up a shoebox in Hounslow doesn't seem like the most cautious approach.

But what do you think? Are these properties a good idea for buyers? Let us know in the comments.