

# live by the river

JACK BRAND reports back on a Docklands apartment and a smart install of the very highest order...

Ideally placed, New Providence Wharf offers stunning Docklands views



**S**mart technology remains a relative luxury; a feature that has the capacity to elevate any home's asking price and to transform it into a truly sought after residence. And, whilst an increasing number of developers are deciding to integrate automated systems into their properties - and a similarly growing number of homeowners are becoming aware of just what can be achieved - a first class smart home still has the power to turn heads and drop jaws. It's even true for the hardened tech connoisseurs at *SmartLife International*, who might like to think they've seen it all, but are, in reality, just as powerless before the charms and temptations of a high-end install as everyone else...

And 'high-end' is certainly the term that should be used when describing the specification of the Docklands show apartment pictured here. Boasting a complement of state-of-the-art AV, communications and control technology, it's impossible not to be impressed. With location, décor and technology on its side, we just had to take a closer look...



All aspects of the apartment's technology have been carefully integrated



Home entertainment kit is unobtrusive until it's required to make an impact



An abundance of glass allows light to flood into the penthouse



Italian marble and high-quality bespoke furniture feature throughout

### capital idea

London has become a magnet for developers and installers eager to deliver the highest of high-end living to those that demand the best. Joining the ranks of the spectacular properties on offer is New Providence Wharf and its array of dazzling showhouse penthouse apartments. Ideally positioned just a few minutes from London's City Airport and Canary Wharf, our featured property is a three-bedroom home that ranks as one of the most luxurious we've had the fortune to happen upon.

Even from the exterior it's clear that this is a special place: its stunning Docklands views are a sight to behold, a fact the developer was clearly aware of when they called for an ideally positioned outdoor hot tub and sauna... Said developer was Ballymore Properties and even a brief glance at the pictures here should make it apparent that they've left nothing in the apartment to chance. The exquisite interior boasts the

finest Italian marble throughout, as well as bespoke furniture from across Europe and high-quality design courtesy of London-based interior designer Carter Tyberghein. Attention to detail is the key to the apartment's success. No expense has been spared ensuring that everything is just right – from the Nepalese rug in the living room to the stunning silk walls and a cloakroom made of an extremely rare (and pricey!) semi-precious stone.

### style and substance

Nor was this attention to detail restricted to décor. The essential ingredient in any smart home is its technology, and the £120,000 high-tech makeover that the apartment has benefited from ensured that there's no shortage of lifestyle-bettering electronics to enjoy. Charged with equipping the property were Essex-based CEDIA installer Chew & Osborne, a company with over 40 years experience catering for audio and video enthusiasts. Working closely with Carter Tyberghein, they have helped create a home in which technology does not detract from aesthetics – as Patrick Tyberghein of Carter Tyberghein remarked, *"You want the technology to be there, but you don't want to see it."*

Indeed, whilst one of the hallmarks of the finest smart homes is the high-tech wizardry that resides within their four walls, another is the skillful manner in which said wizardry is integrated. Perhaps one of the most instantly apparent examples of the care taken by Ballymore and Chew & Osborne in this regard is the manner in which the apartment's flatscreens have been installed. Those selected include a superb 43-inch HD-ready Pioneer plasma screen, to be found in the living room, and a 32-inch



New Providence Wharf comprises an array of high-end properties



LCD screens and DVD-recorders bring entertainment to every bedroom

Sony LCD screen, which is located in the master bedroom. Both these and the other screens in place have been hidden away in specially made cabinets, ensuring that they don't intrude upon the interior aesthetics to any degree whilst in use.

An even more impressive example can be found in the master bedroom's ensuite. Here, a 23-inch waterproof Aquavision LCD screen has been built into the mirror above the sink, allowing the homeowner to keep watching whilst having a shave or even to enjoy TV or a movie from the comfort of the bathroom's spacious tub. Of course, the separate steam room and shower that can also be found in the ensuite may well prove an even more tempting draw...

#### source material

Pleasing as it is to have these screens tucked neatly away, flat-panel TVs are hardly the ugliest items of technology that the smart home will play host to. Source components, processors and receivers are vitally important, but their looks rarely warrant prominent display. Chew & Osborne were clearly well aware of this fact and minimised the number of boxes on show by locating the majority in a Middle Atlantic rack, which can be found in a specially designed cupboard in the master bedroom. The only components left out are the Pace Sky+ box that serves the living room's home cinema system and the DVD-recorders that have been installed in most of the apartment's bedrooms. For a property with such an array of systems, this is no mean feat...

But even this is not all that's been hidden away by the installers – the speakers that help reproduce high-quality audio throughout the apartment have been too. The most impressive example of this can be found in the living room. Delivering sounds from the home cinema system are an array

of in-ceiling Speakercraft 8/3 speakers and, incredibly, an in-ceiling subwoofer! The option chosen for the task is Sonance's Virtuoso A800DR, a model specifically designed to enhance the bass of conventional in-wall and in-ceiling speaker systems. The result is a 5.1-channel surround set-up that's as visually discrete as you could possibly hope for.

In-ceiling models were also specified for and installed in all of the apartment's bedrooms, whilst completing the list of speakers are two pairs of Bose Freespace 51 environmental speakers, cunningly concealed in the bushes of the roof terrace. These are freestanding designs, capable of blending into virtually any outdoor décor and providing excellent coverage thanks to their ability to disperse audio in a wide 360-degree pattern. One pair have been placed near to the terrace's outdoor furniture and the other, either side of the hot tub. The result is that the apartment's owner need never be out of range of high-quality audio and the capabilities of a selection of audio sources...

#### service compris

And a generous selection it is too. To be found in the equipment cupboard is a DRX-701ES



Crucial but intrusive technology is hidden safely out of sight

AMX's touch-panels provide fingertip control of home systems throughout



Control technology blends seamlessly in with the décor



The master bedroom's ensuite highlights the skillful combination of technology and design

DAB tuner from Pure and no fewer than three Audio Request servers. Each of these boasts a 120Gb hard drive, meaning the property has a huge combined capacity of 360Gb on which to store music. Tracks can be ripped from CD onto the Audio Request Fusion Pro and then stored on the other drives – the idea being that even if one hard drive packs up the owner will still have a backup on hand.

Another noteworthy feature of the Audio Request system is its ability to talk to other Audio Request sound servers, so entire music collections can be easily be shared between various apartments and the need to copy tracks repeatedly is removed.

As with all high-tech homes, the ability to control the installed systems is vitally important – there's obviously no point having cutting edge technology if an expert is required to get it to do its job. Chew & Osborne have made things as straightforward as possible for users, employing pre-programmed AMX touchscreen panels throughout the home. Designed to blend in as closely as possible with their surroundings, both black and white wall panels are in place, matching the hue of the interior perfectly.

In addition to controlling the various audio and video sources in the property, the panels can operate the curtains that cover the property's large glass windows and also function as intercoms, making communication between rooms a simple matter. There can be few more impressive control solutions - even the living room gas fire will switch on at the touch of a button.

Nor do its abilities end there, as the multi-talented AMX system has also been integrated with an offering from another big name in the world of smart homes: Lutron. The company have contributed a 32-channel lighting control system that allows the homeowner to set a variety of lighting scenes, helping create an ambience for every occasion. It's even possible for the system to illuminate a pathway between the bedroom and bathroom – perfect if you feel

the call of nature in the middle of the night.

Complementing the aforementioned AMX panels are Lutron panels positioned throughout, including one either side of the bed in every bedroom. As a nice touch, these attractive panels will be engraved once the apartment's eventual owner moves in. Little details such as this only serve to further enhance the positive impression left by installers work...

At New Providence Wharf nothing has been left to chance. The interior décor, home entertainment, communications, lighting and control systems are all of the highest class and make this Docklands property a truly special one. What's more, the skillful integration of technology and design by Chew & Osborne has ensured that all aspects of the home exist in harmony. This is an apartment that will impress anyone lucky enough to see it... ■



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