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Hertfordshire start-up adds resi heavyweights for land drive

A trio of agents that have together handled £1bn in land have joined forces in the launch of Walter Cooper and Co.

The Hertfordshire-based start-up was established by managing director Simon Cox last year, with a strategy to deliver residential and commercial land in the region to housebuilders and developers looking outside of the capital.

Cox spent a decade at Lanes Land, initially as senior sales negotiator and later as land and development director, after the company was bought by Countrywide.

At the start of this year he brought on chief operating officer Ollie Dyson. Dyson has 15 year's experience in housebuilding, working at Taylor Wimpey, Redrow, Metropolitan and Bellway.

After 30 years at Lambert Smith Hampton, Nigel Palmer has also been recruited as land director, adding a specialism in commercial and logistics land and development.

Cox told EG: "I was adamant I didn't want to be a one-man-band. We do a lot of deals with housebuilders and they have to have that confidence of a team around you and a reputation.

"As agents we've got to look at both sides of the transaction, having someone [like Ollie] who spent their whole life working for PLC housebuilders was a valuable input. Nigel has spent his career working for national agencies and has a breadth of experience."

Walter Cooper and Co aims to capitalise on growing demand for land around Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. It aims to expand through Essex and the Home Counties.

In recent months it has already completed deals on behalf of Taylor Wimpey, Stonebond and Croudace and is working with a range of public and private sector clients, supporting acquisitions of unconditional, consented or sites subject to planning.

Cox added: "It's important for us to be different. It is quite a varied marketplace, you have the Savills and the Knight Franks and the smaller agents - we see ourselves as somewhere in the middle, servicing a different clientele."

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