EXECUTIVE MEMBER - DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR 2026

D.F.S PROPERTY SOLUTIONS - OVERVIEW

DION FERRA - SWALLOW

2025 DELIVERED

Combined GDV

£1.24M

What was the combined GDV of the projects you delivered in 2025?

Units Delivered

5

What was the total number of units you delivered in 2025?

2026 DELIVERED

Combined GDV

£2.42M

What was the combined GDV of the projects you delivered in 2026?

Units Delivered

5 Units

What was the total number of units you delivered in 2026?

CURRENT PIPELINE

Pipeline GDV

£2.835M

What is the GDV of the units in your current pipeline?

Pipeline Units

7 Units

How many units are in your current pipeline?

Under Construction

3 Units

How many units do you currently have under construction?

D.F.S PROPERTY SOLUTIONS - CHALLENGE

DION FERRA - SWALLOW

Most difficult property/business challenge overcome in 2026

The biggest challenge was taking on my first ground-up development without any previous experience of delivering one. I had to learn as I went, from securing full planning permission and dealing with daylight and sunlight requirements to arranging development finance for the first time.

There were plenty of unexpected challenges along the way, including:

- **An £80,000 claim from a neighbour** for damage caused to their property by the concrete company. I challenged the claim successfully because the responsibility lay with the contractor.
- **Complications with UK Power Networks** because of the neighbouring substation. A late change to the cables also brought a significant, unexpected cost.
- **Two months of constant rain**, which caused major delays. I'd wanted to put up a temporary roof over the scaffolding, but two builders advised against it, so I listened to them. Looking back, I learned that while expert advice is valuable, I also need to trust my own judgement and challenge recommendations when I believe there's a better solution. Although progress on the house was held up, we kept working on the garden wherever possible.
- **Delays with kitchen tiles coming from Spain**, which meant changing the sequence of work. We fitted the kitchen first and tiled around it afterwards.
- **A major delay with the utility room**, which we'd ordered from Germany alongside the kitchen. The order hadn't been processed, and we were facing a wait of around three months. Rather than accept the delay, I pushed for a solution and arranged for a bespoke unit to be made to match the kitchen. We ended up with a better-quality product, proving that a setback can sometimes lead to a better outcome if you're willing to think differently and take action.

D.F.S PROPERTY SOLUTIONS - CHALLENGE

DION FERRA - SWALLOW

Most difficult property/business challenge overcome in 2026

Key lessons learned

This project taught me that development is about far more than the original appraisal, planning and build. Things will go wrong, costs will change, and other people's mistakes can become your problem if you don't stay on top of them.

The biggest lesson was to take ownership and keep looking for solutions rather than waiting for someone else to fix things. Challenging the £80,000 claim, finding an alternative for the utility room and keeping work moving in the garden all came down to being proactive rather than accepting the first answer.

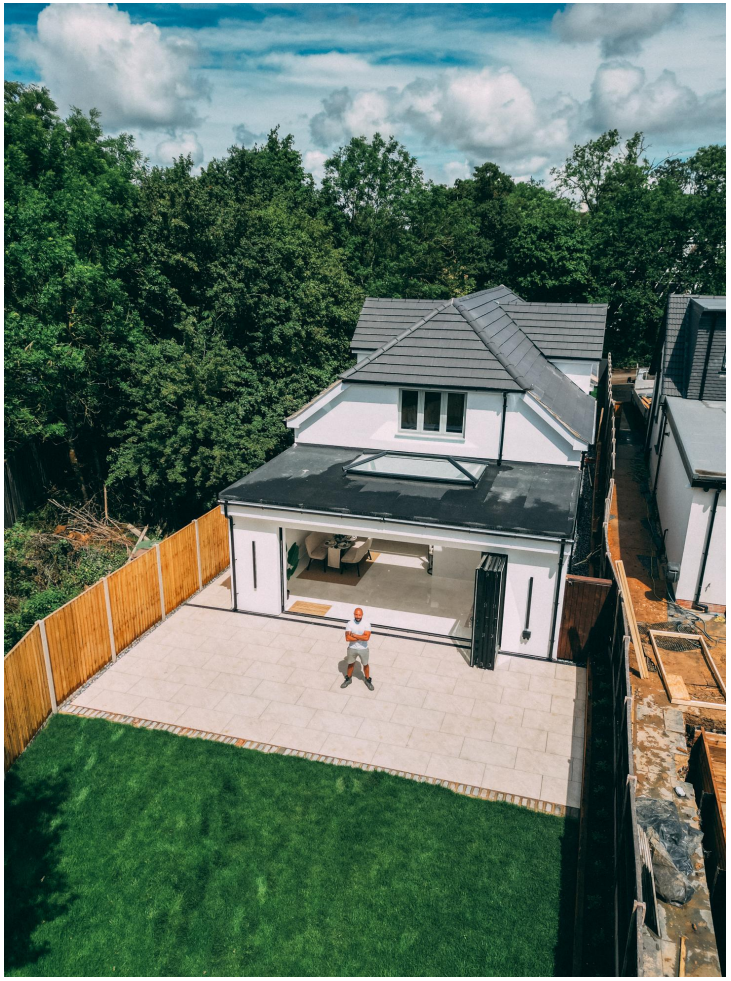
I also learned the importance of questioning advice, planning for contingencies and allowing flexibility in both the budget and the programme. Even experienced contractors can get things wrong, so you need to understand what's happening on your own project and be confident enough to challenge decisions when necessary.

Most importantly, I learned that a lack of experience doesn't have to stop you from taking on something new. You need to be willing to learn, make decisions and take responsibility. The experience has given me a much clearer understanding of the challenges involved in ground-up development and how to approach my next project with greater confidence and better preparation.

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR 2026

D.F.S PROPERTY SOLUTIONS - PHOTOS

DION FERRA - SWALLOW





90 Bucknalls Lane
WD25 9NH

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR 2026

D.F.S PROPERTY SOLUTIONS - PHOTOS

DION FERRA - SWALLOW





90 Bucknalls Lane
WD25 9NH

EXECUTIVE MEMBER - DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR 2026

D.F.S PROPERTY SOLUTIONS - PHOTOS

DION FERRA - SWALLOW





90 Bucknalls Lane
WD25 9NH