

OAKSTEAD FINANCE



A different kind of mortgage brand

How a premium SW London mortgage broker built a website worthy of its high-value clients. Backed by Krystal's WordPress hosting and hands-on support.

Oakstead Finance

The client and the challenge

Oakstead Finance is a boutique mortgage advisory based in leafy SW London. Most brokers in the category lean into base-rate explainers and stock photography. James built Oakstead around something quieter and more aspirational. Think beautiful homes, clean typography and a logo where the O and F interlock to form a key.

James founded Oakstead alongside his other Krystal-hosted property venture, The Mortgage Blog. Oakstead is the premium brand. Its audience are homebuyers and remortgagers in higher-value brackets who want to feel reassured that they're in capable hands.

"I didn't want to look like every other mortgage company," James says. **"I wanted it to feel uncluttered and premium."** Eight pages. No clutter. Organic search at its core. Even the Instagram feed reads more like a curated interiors account than a finance brand.



The shopfront of my business is really important. It lets my customers know they're in the right place. I sleep well at night knowing the website is in good hands."

James Blackler,
Founder, Oakstead Finance



Oakstead Finance

How we helped them

The trigger: outgrowing a rigid template

The original plan was Squarespace. James's friend, a creative director, had already developed the Oakstead name, logo and brand identity. He was familiar with the platform and recommended it. The constraints showed up almost immediately. **"Functionality to get it to look a certain way was almost impossible,"** James recalls. **"Simple things, like moving a button, had no flexibility. With Squarespace you can't take that for granted. You'd need to pay someone to do it for you."**

For a brand whose whole proposition was looking different, that was a problem. So they moved the in-progress site to Krystal and rebuilt it on a fully configurable WordPress setup. Krystal's team helped while James kept building. He was teaching himself WordPress and SEO at the same time, which meant breaking things, often. **"I kept breaking the templates, and the Krystal team was always available to help out."**

A configurable foundation, with a safety net

On Krystal, the WordPress configuration was straightforward and completely flexible. James could shape every detail of the brand. The spacing. The buttons. How images sat on the page. All without paying a designer for every change.

Where his self-taught skills hit a limit, Krystal's support team stepped in. They answered tickets. They fixed what broke. The site came together.

That same support culture surfaced one of James's hardest-earned lessons. On an earlier project, a freelance arrangement went wrong when a subcontractor wasn't paid and retaliated by trying to lock James out of the website. **"It's very important to work with people you trust,"** he says. With Krystal, he had a hosting partner he could call on. A UK-based team. Real humans who knew his sites by name.

He has also future-proofed the brand on the same platform. He registered around a number of domain variations of the Oakstead name through Krystal so no one else can claim them.



I kept breaking the WordPress templates, and the Krystal team were always available to help out."

James Blackler,
Founder, Oakstead Finance



Oakstead Finance

Results: a phone that rings

Oakstead launched publicly following Financial Conduct Authority approval. That was the only real delay, and James used the wait to keep writing content. Since launch, the site has done exactly what he designed it to do: bring in qualified leads from homebuyers and remortgagers in the brackets Oakstead was built to serve. The Google reviews are stacking up too. The website is also the backbone of his offline referral network.

Estate agents, finance professionals and personal referrals all funnel back to oaksteadfinance.uk. The site has to verify everything James's referrers say about him. **"Social validation & reviews. They all form part of whether people choose to contact you or one of your competitors,"** he says. **"Looking professional matters."**

What's next

With the foundations in place, James has several initiatives in the pipeline to grow and develop the business. Whatever shape those take, the website will keep doing what it has done from day one: act as the credible, premium shopfront that everything else points back to.

For James, the reason he's happy to recommend Krystal is simple. **"I want people to know how good the tech and the support team are,"** he says. **"I needed support and got loads of help getting it right. The shopfront of my business is really important, and I sleep well at night knowing it's in good hands."**

