

PRESS RELEASE

15th April 2004

New homes opened



Photo opportunity in the marquee at 2.30pm Friday 16th April with David Heyes MP at Wellington Court, Adam Street, Ashton-under-Lyne

Tenants who faced demolition of their homes are sitting pretty thanks to Ashton's newest housing scheme.

Wellington Court is a development of 21 high-quality flats for older people in the centre of Ashton-under-Lyne. It is the second housing scheme built by the New Charter Housing Trust Group.

Many of the residents have moved across town from flats (at Wellington Road) on a site needed for the Greater Manchester Metrolink tram system. For a decade, the threat of redevelopment hung over the tenants. After a long campaign by them to be found an alternative site near the town centre, a car park was eventually identified, bought from Tameside Council and Wellington Court built.



business for neighbourhoods

New Charter was moving a community, so it was a unique opportunity to involve tenants in the design from the outset. A particular concern of theirs was security. The scheme is 'Secured by Design' approved and is a courtyard development with surrounding walls and railings. Car parking is controlled with electronic gates; video door entries allow all residents to see and hear visitors before letting them in. Tenants chose many of the details of their own flats: carpets, colours and finishes in kitchens and bathrooms – right down to the detail of the type of handles. Those tenants who moved from Wellington Road even chose which flat they wanted.

The flats are all two bedroomed and are in three storey blocks. All are served by lifts. The flats are fully centrally heated, double-glazed, and insulated to a very high standard.

The design seeks to complement the adjacent (listed) Victorian mill building, while at the same time providing high-quality modern living. The Ashton Civic Society originally opposed planning consent, but has viewed the development and praised the care taken in the design, the way the building integrates the townscape and how it improves the look of the adjacent park - the Memorial Gardens.

The scheme was officially opened by Ashton-under-Lyne MP David Heyes, who was involved by landlord and tenants in their search for the right site.

Chair of New Charter Housing (North) Jimmy Burns said, "Involving residents in the design and specification of these homes is what New Charter is all about. Many residents

would have preferred to stay in Wellington Road but the Metrolink station forced us all to look at alternatives. It's great to be able to provide some new homes alongside the millions we are spending on improving our other homes".

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. New Charter formed in 1999 as the new landlords to own and manage nearly 16,400 properties transferred from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council in Greater Manchester. With a turnover of £49million a year and a workforce of almost 800, New Charter is one of the twenty largest Registered Social Landlords (RSL's), and is regulated by The Housing Corporation, a Government watchdog.
2. The location is off Adam Street behind Albion Mill at the top of Penny Meadow.
3. Secured by Design is UK Police flagship initiative supporting the principles of designing out crime. It is primarily an initiative to encourage the building industry to adopt crime prevention measures to assist in reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, creating a safer and more secure environment. Secured by Design supports one of the Government's key planning objectives - creating secure, quality places where people wish to live and work.
4. **iN business for neighbourhoods** is a major new campaign, through which housing associations and companies across England are demonstrating the positive difference they make to people's homes, communities and quality of life. New Charter is one of over 370 housing companies and associations supporting the initiative. Engaging customers in everything we do is part of our response to the **iN business for neighbourhoods** campaign. Our commitment to customers is to involve them at all levels within the business.

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