



Contact: Paula Littleboy
Title: PA & Corporate Marketing Officer
Tele: 01924 831009
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NEWS RELEASE

First HOLD scheme in West Yorkshire a success

Residents of the first HOLD scheme (Home Ownership for people with long term disabilities) in the West Yorkshire region celebrated moving in to their new homes in Featherstone at a celebratory lunch event on 1st December 2009 at the Kings Croft Hotel in Pontefract. Chevin Housing Association recently completed the HOLD scheme and were delighted to be celebrating its success at the lunch event with staff, contractors, partners and residents.

Chevin were initially approached by Wakefield Council to identify suitable accommodation for five adults with learning disabilities in Summer 2008. The accommodation they were occupying at the time was due for demolition and an alternative was required. Support workers from Wakefield Council along with the five residents went searching for suitable accommodation and soon identified a brand new housing scheme being built close to where the residents were already living.

Chevin and Wakefield Council identified that the scheme was suitable for the residents. A successful funding bid was made to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and Chevin were able to proceed with the purchase.

The residents moved in their new homes during October 2009 and are settling in really well.

At the lunch event the residents wanted to show everyone what the experience had been like for them moving in to a new home. They designed a time-line highlighting their experiences and ups and downs throughout the whole process which showed how well they had coped and adapted to the changes.

Helen Martland, Business Development Manager at Chevin Housing said "The HOLD scheme is a fantastic opportunity to help people achieve independent living and for Chevin to increase the housing choice available to people with disabilities. We are delighted to have been involved in the Featherstone project and hope to deliver more schemes like this in the region."

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Maureen Cummings, Wakefield Council's Cabinet Member for Adults and Health said: "People with learning disabilities are among the most vulnerable and socially excluded in our society. By working with Chevin Housing we have been able to provide the opportunity to live independently and to help people become part of the community. We are looking at providing even more housing for people with learning disabilities to increase the chance for them to buy homes of their own using HOLD. I hope the residents who have moved into their new homes at Featherstone enjoy living there and I wish them all the best."

David Curtis, Regional Director for the HCA in Yorkshire and the Humber, added: "The funding provided by the HCA to community focused projects such as Featherstone is integral to its overall strategy of creating thriving communities. The HCA's ultimate aim is to create places people enjoy living in and the first successful HOLD scheme which supports a sense of community and offers residents independence is a great way of achieving this."

Chevin are looking at providing more homes through the HOLD scheme in Wakefield, Sheffield and West Yorkshire in the near future.

Photographed: One of the HOLD residents with Councillor Maureen Cummings at the lunch event.

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