

## 'RUN-DOWN' FLATS RESCUED TO MAKE NEW HOMES

# Homeless get step on to property ladder!



**SCHEME:** The Reverend Canon Gordon Dey, right, who has watched the scheme come to fruition. Pictures: Jacqueline Graham



by **ALI DAVIES**  
T&A Reporter

Homeless people have been applying the finishing touches to their new 'des res' in a block of flats that has been saved from demolition.

Next month they will move into Parbeck Court in Holme Wood, Bradford, which has been given a new lease of life thanks to a housing charity.

Impact Community Developments started the scheme to help vulnerable young people last September.

Working in partnership with St Christopher's Church in Holme Wood, it has taken about six months to transform the formerly run-down block into 18 modern, fully-furnished flats which will provide accommodation for 30 young adults.

The one or two-bedroom flats will have central heating, CCTV and 24-hour safety support workers. They will house people aged between 16 and 25 who are homeless or soon to be homeless.

Darren Henson, 20, will be one of the first tenants. He and his partner Sophie Pratt, 16, have been helping out with the decorating, although Sophie has not been able to help out so much recently as she is seven-months-pregnant.

Darren, who is soon to be homeless and is unemployed, said: "I am looking forward to living here. Compared to what the flats were like they are really great now."

"It's been a good experience because I have learned new skills. I know how to do painting and decorating, but by helping out with this I have learnt how to do tiling, carpeting and pipe work."

Impact now runs a total of 55 flats in the Bradford district, which enables it to house and support more than 65 young people, although its waiting list continues to grow.

In an attempt to get the project off the ground a number of high-profile businesses rallied to support the charity by giving it raw materials.

One of the firms, bathroom manufacturer Shires, which has a factory in Becksdale Road, Bradford, gave 18 bathroom suites and other materials

which helped to start the project.

The Rev Canon Gordon Dey of the Tong and Holme Wood Parish, said:

"These flats have previously been a disaster and in 20 years no-one has been able to manage them properly. Now with Impact, there's a chance of getting it right."

"Young people will find a route to independent living and that will be great help for them and a great help to Holme Wood."

Nigel Delaney chief executive officer of Impact, said:

"We have had an amazing response in such a short space of time and are extremely grateful for the generosity of the management and staff at Shires, for its support and speed of response to our challenge."

"For more information about Impact contact 08204 050513 or visit [www.impactcharity.org](http://www.impactcharity.org)

e-mail: [al.davies@bradford.newsquest.co.uk](mailto:al.davies@bradford.newsquest.co.uk)

### TEAM:

Professionals and tenant helpers apply the finishing touches to the flats, above, from top of ladder, Roger Wardley, Michael Doran, Lee Fields and Darren Henson

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