



Chailey Court, 25-27 Winchester Road,
Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 8UE
Telephone: 01256 302302
Fax: 01256 357375
E-mail: kingfisherhomeswessex.co.uk

NEWS RELEASE

Date: 7 July 2008

Contact: Penny Luke
Telephone: 01256 302305

“THE HEAT IS ON” FOR FIRE SERVICE AT *ILLEGAL RAVE!*

Kingfisher Homes (Wessex), a subsidiary of Kingfisher Housing Association, based in Basingstoke are pleased to be able to assist the fire crews of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) by enabling them to carry out a ‘real life’ training exercise in one of its empty properties.

The scenario: A warm Summer evening, a group of youngsters have organised an illegal rave in a disused warehouse. A fire starts in an empty office and soon smoke fills the building. It is not known how many people are inside.

Fortunately this fire wasn’t for real but this scenario is one that firefighters could quite easily be faced with. Sadly, in the UK there were 491 fire-related deaths in 2006¹.

Kingfisher Homes have helped RBFRS by letting them use an empty building for training exercises, which is soon to be demolished in readiness for redevelopment.

¹ Source: CLG Fire Statistics United Kingdom, 2006

During this training exercise firefighters will be assessed on their use of breathing apparatus, incident command and putting current policies and procedures into practice. All of which are vital to their jobs and in saving lives.

Deborah Broadhurst, Executive Director at Kingfisher Homes said, “We are only too pleased to be able to help RBFRS in this exercise. They are much valued members of the community and we acknowledge that training exercises such as these are vital in their work. In fact, Kingfisher Housing Association assisted Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service with a similar exercise in 1997 when Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV) was being trialled.”

Wokingham Fire Station Manager, Eddie Cardoso, said: “Training is an essential part of our work and being able to train in a building such as this is invaluable, as it provides us with a demanding real-life situation. We would like to thank Kingfisher Homes for allowing us to use the building. We’d also be delighted to hear from anyone else who has an empty building we could use for training.”

The single storey building, purchased from Wokingham and District Council by Kingfisher Homes (Wessex), a subsidiary of Kingfisher Housing Association, currently has planning for 12 flats and 9 houses.

For further information on fire safety or if you own an empty building and would like to help your local firefighters with training exercises such as this one please contact Wokingham Fire Station on 0118 9322 510.

www.kha.org.uk

Contact – Penny Luke, Marketing Manager on 01256 302305 or Deborah Broadhurst, Group Development Director on 01256 302304.

Note to the Editor:

A photographer and/or reporter are invited to attend the drill on Monday 14 July at 7.00pm at 56-58 Woosehill Lane, Wokingham, Berks RG41 2TS. To ensure your safety please confirm your attendance with Debbie Down, Marketing Executive on 01256 302305.

Wessex Housing Partnership is a partnership between the well established Housing Associations of HVHS Housing Group, based in Winchester and Kingfisher Housing Association based in Basingstoke, with a combined history of 73 years in operation.

HVHS and Kingfisher own around 6,150 properties for social rent, shared ownership and private renting for young single people, couples, families and the elderly. Also over 500 new properties are being developed and bought every year, helping to house local people in housing need.

Wessex Housing Partnership operate and own properties in Hampshire, Wiltshire and Berkshire.