



PRESS RELEASE

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**Photocall: 4.30pm, Tuesday, 24 July, Compedium Information Centre
Main Street, Weston Heights development**

FIRST RESIDENTS RECEIVE KEYS AS £55 MILLION ESTATE TRANSFORMATION BECOMES A REALITY

“We are very excited about moving into our new bungalow.” That was the reaction of Bill and Pam Butcher when they heard they would be the first residents to move into new homes which are being built at Weston Heights as part of a major regeneration programme.

The £55 million transformation of the former National Coal Board estate was commissioned by RENEW North Staffordshire and is being carried out by Compendium – a joint venture between affordable housing and regeneration specialist Lovell and affordable housing provider Riverside Group.

The Weston Heights redevelopment will provide a wide mix of housing types for sale, rent or shared ownership in a new layout along with new green space.

Under a masterplan supported by 81 per cent of the local community, 250 homes will be demolished and replaced with 278 new homes in a completely new layout. When complete 70 per cent of housing will be owner occupied, making the new community much closer to the national balance of privately-owned and affordable rented housing.

Bill and Pam Butcher have lived on the estate for 23 years, and had requested a move from their three-bedroom house in Selby Street to a bungalow.

The Butchers will move in during next month when final work on the bungalow is completed in the next two weeks.

“We are both very excited that our new home is nearly ready,” said Mr Butcher. “We are really looking forward to moving into our new bungalow and remaining close to all our friends who live on the estate.”

Hardial Bhogal, director of RENEW North Staffordshire, said: “This sums up everything that we are working towards - a blighted neighbourhood transformed into an attractive, sustainable neighbourhood, with the right mix of homes to meet the needs of local people. “

“We are delighted to have handed over the keys to the first new home at Weston Heights,” said Compendium director Dave Bullock. “The development will provide high quality housing that will make a real difference to the lives of the people who live on the estate.”

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Notes to editors

1. The keys were handed over to Mr and Mrs Butcher by Peter Bounds, chair of the new North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership's development group, and Margaret Allen, Housing Corporation Field Director (Central).

2. RENEW North Staffordshire is the housing market renewal pathfinder for Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Biddulph East. Our aim is to help make North Staffordshire a thriving, diverse conurbation where people want to live, work, invest and study. We do this by working with communities and partners to:
 - balance housing supply and demand
 - retain and attract population
 - provide quality housing that meets the aspirations of existing and new residents
 - transform the environment and make the best of our heritage and green space
 - support economic regeneration.
3. The RENEW North Staffordshire team can be contacted by the public on 01782 232024 or renew@civic1.stoke.gov.uk. Further information can be found on the website: www.renewnorthstaffs.gov.uk.
4. Lovell, which has offices in Birmingham, Cambridge, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leatherhead, Leeds, London, Manchester, Merseyside, Newcastle, Norwich, Nottingham, Stockton-on-Tees and Tamworth, is Britain's leading provider of affordable housing. It is a member of Morgan Sindall plc, the construction and regeneration group, which operates through four specialist divisions: fit out, construction, infrastructure services and affordable housing.

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