

West London gets purpose-built, affordable artists' studios

Acme Studios has opened 12 new-build artists' studios as part of a major housing development in West London. Manor Point is a mixed-tenure scheme built by Kensington Housing Trust, part of the Catalyst Housing Group, which contains 125 residential units for rent or to buy through a shared ownership scheme. The ground floor of one residential block includes 12 artists' studios built to Acme's own specifications.



The 12 ground-floor artists' studios at Harrow Road. Photo: Greg Goodale (2010)

Acme Chief Executive Jonathan Harvey explains, 'East London is synonymous with art yet there are artists in need of affordable studio space across London. We are delighted that this development will bring opportunities for artists in an area where rent levels make it a challenge to find affordable space.'

The studios are designed to meet the needs of practicing artists and include 3-metre high ceilings, extra large doors, Wi-Fi and windows which maximise the available wall space. Acme has purchased a 75-year lease on the studios which will guarantee affordable rent levels in perpetuity.

The development was a result of discussions with Catalyst Housing Group and the London Borough of Brent. Acme Director Property Development David Panton explains, 'Achieving permanent affordable artists' studios as part of a major housing development is a result of Brent Council's planning department understanding the needs of artists in the area and the benefits artists bring to mixed-use projects.'

High demand from artists in West London means the studios are already fully occupied. All of the artists working in the studios live in the local area, with a third coming from the boroughs of Brent and Hammersmith & Fulham where the studios are located:

June Bartlett, Emma Davis, Samson Kambalu, Phyliss Gorlick King, Kathy Kubicki, Apolonia J Lobo, Alex MacIntosh, Katherine Lubar, Soledad Bustos Moron, Siri Perera, Yukako Shibata and Poppy Whatmore.

The studios at Harrow Road form part of Acme Studios' ambitious development programme which is part-funded by Arts Council England Grants for the arts – capital programme. The current phase of development will result in over new 180 studios in London by 2012.

ENDS

Notes for editors

Founded by Jonathan Harvey and David Panton in 1972, Acme Studios is a London-based charity which provides affordable studio space, residencies and awards for non-commercial fine artists. Acme has pioneered new models of mixed-use developments with commercial house builders and social housing providers including:

- 50 studios at the Galleria, Peckham, SE15 with Barratt Homes.
- 21 studios at Leven Road, Poplar, E14 with Swan Housing Group.
- 12 studios at Harrow Road, NW10 with Catalyst Housing Group
- 15 studios at Stratford High Street, E15 with Genesis Housing Group (opens 2012).
- 49 studios at Lesney Toys Factory, Homerton, E9 with Telford Homes (opens 2012).

Acme manages over 400 studios in 12 buildings across London.

For further information about Acme Studios, see www.acme.org.uk or call 020 8981 6811. For further press information, please contact Jack Fortescue, Communications Officer at:

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