

## Press Release

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### **New VEGA building lights up Brighton & Hove**

Southern Housing Group has completed the construction of 40 apartments for rent in Hove, East Sussex. The striking new VEGA building, on Kingsway, echos thirties architecture and includes a light feature linked to the changing tide. Southern Housing Group's contractor for the project was Denne, which is part of the Bouygues Construction Group.

The former car dealership building that previously occupied the site displayed elements of Art Deco architecture from the 1930s. The new VEGA building incorporates this style, displaying a simple design in its smooth curved shapes and horizontal lines.

The 1930s design era, known as Streamline Moderne, extended into transport with planes, trains and automobiles, with pilot Amelia Earhart the first woman to fly the Atlantic, making the Lockheed Vega airplane famous. This historical backdrop is the main influence behind the name of the new apartment building.

In response to the City Council's Percent for Art initiative, the design features glass columns at the front of the building which illuminate during darkness. A central blue column within the lighting panel is linked to the tide. A high tide is represented when the blue reaches the full height of the building. Tidal data for the next 26 years has been supplied by the National Oceanography Centre, part of the Natural Environment Research Council.

Brighton-based artist Stig Evans, who was commissioned to design the installation, described it as: "an attractive and continuously changing lighting system, which is intended to highlight the building's affinity with the nearby sea."

Jeremy Barkway, Regional Development Manager, Southern Housing Group said: "We are especially proud of this scheme, as our commitment to unlocking potential through design is uniquely captured through the artistic charm of the treatments to the elevations. The architecture of this mixed tenure scheme, puts VEGA on the map as a great place to live."

Nick Brown, Deputy Managing Director of Denne, said: "The VEGA scheme not only delivers much-needed affordable homes for local people but the construction also created three apprenticeship opportunities. These are now being followed through at our site-based skills

centre on Southern Housing Group's Pankhurst project, next to Brighton General Hospital, where more training places are being provided."

The new building comprises 40 apartments:

- 14 one bedroom
- 14 two bedroom
- 12 three bedroom

The flats will be a mix of affordable rent, intermediate market rent and open market rent. Car parking for all the apartments is provided in a secure basement. Four of these apartments are designed as wheelchair accessible. The development has achieved Code for Sustainable Homes level 4, with high levels of natural light, a highly efficient centralised heating system and photovoltaic panels which turn the sun's energy into electricity, to power communal areas, including the lighting of the columns at the front of the building.

It is hoped that VEGA will be viewed as a landmark building on Kingsway with an art installation that can be enjoyed by all.

## **Notes to Editors**

- Over the last 110 years, Southern Housing Group has become one of the largest housing associations in the south of England, housing 66,000 residents, managing more than 25,500 homes, employing almost 800 people and working with more than 70 local authorities across the South East, including the Isle of Wight.
- Our mission of 'Unlocking the potential of people and places' unites the organisation behind a common set of qualities and objectives.
- Our activities focus on four key areas: the development of quality affordable housing; housing and neighbourhood management; a range of housing options for rent and home ownership; and social and economic regeneration.
- Our social and economic regeneration work is undertaken to improve the lives of residents in the communities and neighbourhoods where we build and manage homes. It provides tangible evidence of our commitment to building sustainable communities.

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