

ISIS SPEECH ISLINGTON WHARF - LAUNCH

MARK RYDER

Good evening, and thank you for attending this event. I'm Mark Ryder, the Chief Executive of ISIS Waterside Regeneration. Welcome to the launch of Islington Wharf – that's the site you can see over the canal through the glazed side of this rather excellent marquee.

Behind the hoardings you will see that site preparation works have already started. Within two years the land will look very different as the location of our 21 storey sandstone and copper tower. It will be the landmark building on a 3 acre site as a gateway to the Millennium Community of New Islington and as an integral part of the new communities developing on this side of Great Ancoats Street. It will be the tallest building in this area and will act as a beacon for New Islington. When complete Islington Wharf will have over 500 homes, with office, retail and leisure spaces – in about ten minutes it's going to have some lovely fireworks over it!

The reason we're on this side of the canal is that we wanted you to see the site in the context of the Ashton Canal, with Lock No.1 over there and the lock-keeper's cottage, which has been illuminated so nicely tonight. Where we are currently standing, is also a later phase of Islington Wharf – we hope to build around the metro stop, the line of which is proposed to run through the middle of this marquee.

All our sites are on the waterside, and we are developing them in ways which create maximum value to residents, visitors and waterway users - not just building schemes at the water's edge, putting the water premium on the prices and walking away. Our developments should be successful as destinations on the waterway network as well as for the residents, businesses and visitors that enjoy the buildings and public realm. We want this to be somewhere boaters enjoy stopping off on their way to the centre of Manchester or east to the Huddersfield Canal.



If you don't know about ISIS, we are backed by British Waterways, AMEC and Morley Investments' Igloo Regeneration Fund and we are now 3 ½ years old.

Across the UK we are developing 170 acres of waterside brownfield land in 9 cities, including Glasgow, Birmingham, Nottingham, Leeds and West London. We have a genuine commitment to high quality and well designed public realm around complementary uses – leisure, hotels, residential, business and retail.

This is an important day for us as it marks the start of ISIS' delivery phase and will be closely followed later in the year by 2 more launches – one at Leeds Canal Basin where we are uniting the City Centre with its waterfront and the other at Dundas Wharf Glasgow - which itself marks the start of regeneration of European significance, but on a human scale along the Glasgow branch of the Forth & Clyde Canal. By the end of the year we will also have planning consent for our major regeneration schemes in Birmingham, Nottingham and London – together totalling over 2 million sq ft of development. Delivery of those schemes will start next year.

Everyone at ISIS is passionate about regeneration, and today's launch of our flagship site, comes at a pivotal moment in UK city centre living.

An over-supply of one and 2 bedroom apartments, many of them Identikit in design, boarded up ground floors in sterile developments and a slow down in the market, have prompted hard questions about the sustainability of city centre living.

Those now living in the city centre say they yearn for a mix of people, that they miss a real community made up of families and of different types of people of all age groups. They are also tired of soul-less and sterile modern apartment blocks.

New reports from both the Urban Task Force and the Institute for Public Policy Research Centre are saying the same thing – it's time to move on from the

monoculture of city centre living, which only appeals to the pockets and aspirations of one group of people.

Here as Islington Wharf we are building somewhere which we believe will be a vibrant new place for the community of New Islington. We hope that this is the first of many ISIS developments which will inspire new ways of living in cities - not only more families, but more living space, more choice of housing, more intelligence in design – a commitment to building real communities – we call it buy to live.

We are realistic enough to know that sustainable communities are a challenging aim but we passionately believe they are possible to build – that they are not just a buzzword to push the right political buttons.

We are not alone in our thinking. Islington Wharf is being delivered in partnership with the City Council and New East Manchester. I know they are passionate about helping city living to mature and will do all they can to secure the necessary infrastructure – transport, schools and health facilities.

What is different about Islington Wharf? Well, the first phases of Islington Wharf will feature 40 different types of housing. We're inspired by the European model of city living – so our homes are designed to appeal to a far wider range of people than the usual. Islington Wharf will attract: owner occupiers, elderly, empty nesters, individuals and the invisible renter. All our apartments are well designed, well specified and well finished

Islington Wharf will have some 25 family homes with private gardens. There will also be a large communal garden - set in a dramatic podium - where children can play, people can meet - perhaps have a barbecue or just sit and chat.

But the development as a whole will not be gated off – if this scheme is to work, we must animate the waterfront – we want a deli, a bar, shops and a hotel – and not just the usual big names you see across any High Street.

We want to attract independents and entrepreneurs: people who will have a stake in creating an individual character and atmosphere to the place – essential to help foster a community. The long term management of the space will be important and we are working with the experts Living City ensure to that this is innovative and makes the most of the opportunity to integrate Islington Wharf with the millennium community and the Ashton Canal corridor.

All this must be an integral part of the resurgence of this area of Manchester and it must help to enhance the wider community and environment of East Manchester.

Our deeds should prove as good as our fine words. Well, you may think, lots of developers use fine words - why would ISIS be different?

Firstly, we have different motivations from most developers. Yes of course we have to make profits – but 50% of those profits will go back into the waterways. Secondly, we believe our approach makes good business sense – taking a long term view and creating vibrant destinations ultimately creates pride, footfall and value.

Since ISIS launched at the first Urban Summit in 2002, we have been preparing for this delivery phase in our evolution as a business and it is tremendously fitting that of the 14 sites currently in our portfolio, the first to be launched is here in Manchester. This city can be proud of the fact it is THE exemplar of post-industrial regeneration in the UK. That's thanks to the can do attitude of Manchester City Council and the vision and risk-taking of its entrepreneurs.

It's especially fitting that Islington Wharf's neighbours are English Partnerships and Urban Splash's New Islington (over there) and Artisan's scheme on this side.

I was at University here in the 80s. I was a regular at the Hacienda and enjoyed the city for three years. 5 years ago when the millennium community was still an idea I brought forward Royal Mill in Ancoats for ING adjacent to the Rochdale Canal on the otherside of the millennium community. You could say I have always had a belief in this areas. Every time I come back to Manchester and this particular part I am reminded of how much the city has improved since my student days.

Another great thing about Manchester is how successful it has been and continues to be in extending the benefits of regeneration outside the city centre. As I said earlier, we are delivering Islington Wharf in partnership with the City Council and New East Manchester Urban Regeneration Company. I would now like to introduce Tom Russell, its Chief Executive who will say a few words about how Islington Wharf fits into the URC's overall vision.

TOM speaks

MR:

Thank you, Tom. I would just like to once again thank you all for coming. I would also like to thank my team for getting us this far and also for this evenings event – both the ISIS personnel and all our external consultants. Now before we light the blue touchpaper and stand well back, if you want to know more about ISIS, have a look at the boards and the DVDs, I'm here together with some of my team to speak to people, and of course Knight Frank staff are here to talk to any potential purchasers.

If you are interested or intrigued in what we are trying to do, please have a look at the ISIS website. And of course, please also tell your friends, colleagues and associates that ISIS is a developer that really is doing things differently. Please spread the word about Islington Wharf and the public sales launch this Saturday.



You can enjoy the fireworks either from inside or you can make your way to the outside decking through the doors. Thank you very much and have a great night.