

Welcome to Victoria Square on behalf of Northwards Housing.

Victoria Square was constructed in 1894. The five storey, four-sided square building originally contained 235 two roomed and 48 single roomed dwellings; it now houses 164 one and two bedroom properties. The four corner turret towers contained common laundries and the lofts contained drying rooms. Dwellings were grouped into pairs, sharing a common lobby, with a sink and water closet. There were no baths and no hot water supply.

‘The Dwellings’ (as Victoria Square was then known) attracted some hostile press historically as it did not fit in with the more modern style being promoted by the 1930s.

They had no bathrooms, and washing and sanitary arrangements were shared between pairs of tenements - a thoroughly unsatisfactory arrangement. Even so they represented a big improvement as compared with the slum houses which they replaced.

It avoided demolition, and continued to survive in its tenement state throughout the two World Wars, even withstanding a bomb in World War II!



By the late 1970s, demolition was again being mooted. New housing following World War II had been built in Wythenshawe, and new high rise blocks were being built in Manchester and Salford as entire slum areas were demolished.

Once again, however, it escaped demolition and it was suggested that the Square could be used to house older people. The Council converted the tenements into flats and put in lifts.

In 1988 the building was given Grade II listed status in order for its beauty to be retained.

In November 2001 a programme of repair and security work begun; gates were put on the open entrances, and CCTV was installed. This scheme won a "secure by design" award. In 2005 the new launderette was opened by Cllr. Jim Battle. Freda the cow was donated to the Square in June 2005, and in 2006 the residents committee received a cash grant to improve the central square and garden, turning it into a green space for everyone in the Square to enjoy.

The Square was run by Manchester City Council until December 2005, when Northwards Housing took over. Improvement work has been ongoing, including new windows and bathrooms or kitchens in all flats.

The Square is currently having an external improvements scheme undertaken as part of the cyclical maintenance programme. This includes concrete balcony and balustrade repairs, roof and chimney works, pointing, intercom improvements and general decoration works.

Each wing of the building has a warden who is available between the hours of 9am - 5pm. Out of these hours a remote service is available.

All works have been undertaken with consent from the Manchester City Councils Planning Department, Conservation Officers and English Heritage in respect of the Grade II listed status.

Future energy improvement work is scheduled within the next 2-3 years - this is currently at feasibility study stage. Given the listed status this work looks to include internal wall insulation and associated refurbishment works whilst this is undertaken (including kitchens and bathrooms [adapted where required], decoration and rewiring works) and replacement heating systems (to meet EU Energy Efficiency Directive and to reduce the risk of overheating in the summer). Ground Source Heat Pumps are being considered for the latter.

Thank you and have a safe onward journey.

