

# CHRISTINE YORATH - FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT!



**Interior designer, property guru and City Dweller Magazine columnist tells us why first impressions are so important and how you can create a good one every time.**

**As a developer, I have always paid a lot of attention to the entrance hall and communal areas of any apartment schemes I have built.**

It is now 16 years since I converted a beautiful Grade II Listed building on Wellington Street in Leeds into 18 individual apartments. I could have had much narrower corridors in the communal areas and gained at least 1000sq ft extra of sellable space but I chose to have a very large entrance hall and landing spaces to each floor the size of a small apartment and although today I would design a different colour scheme, I am still very pleased with the decision I made on spatial planning.

At the Biba house in York I was keen to create a feeling of glamour and elegance whilst designing for practicality and ease of maintenance. Landlords achieve better rents in buildings with attractive and well cared for communal areas and owner-occupiers enjoy more pride in their home ownership and see better returns when they come to sell their home in such an apartment scheme.

Estate agents talk about 'kerb appeal' and if you own a house rather than an apartment, this may be

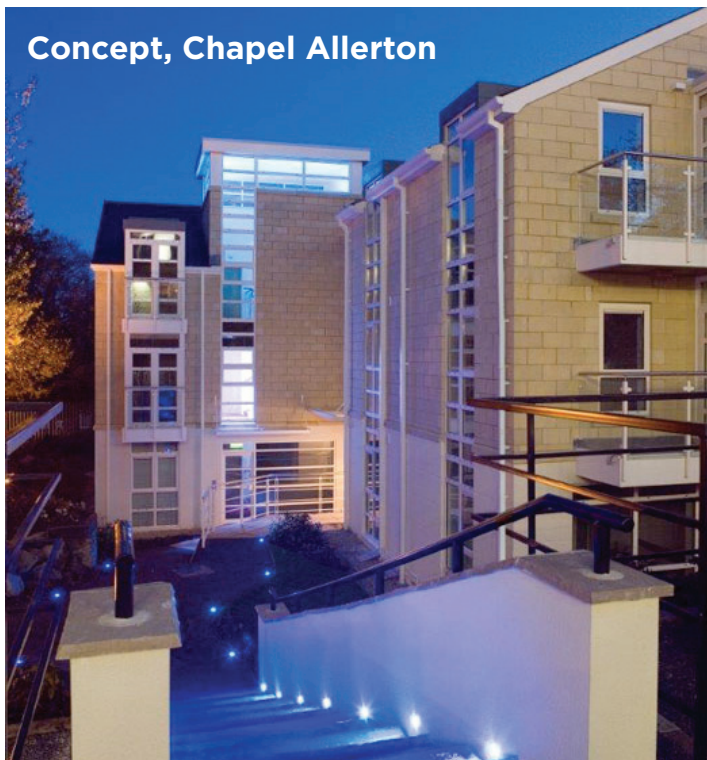
reflected in well maintained paintwork and clean and well dressed windows as well as landscaping. Plants in tubs and hanging baskets near the front door deliver a good news message. When I built the Concept apartments in Chapel Allerton some years ago I used landscaping and a lighting scheme to enhance the contemporary building.

Planners seem to want to deny the existence of the motorcar and greedy developers will build apartment buildings where the footprint of the building leaves insufficient space for an attractive entrance.

If you are a tenant looking to rent an apartment you will probably notice that the developments, where there is an on site caretaker, have superior maintenance and appearance of their communal areas to ones without such a service. A good block management team is essential and if you're buying into a leasehold development, make sure you find out what the level of service is in the development you're interested in.

**Learn to trust in your own first impression and don't settle for less!**

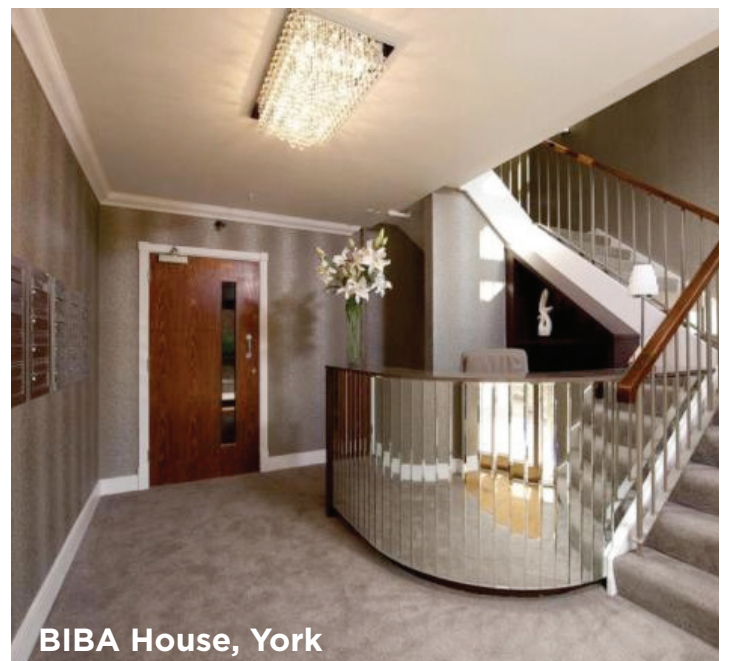
*Till next time,  
Christine*



Concept, Chapel Allerton



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