

# From Porsches to Parks

Specialist cars is the area of expertise in which Tom Hartley has made his name, but having reached the pinnacle in that business he is now diverting some of his attention to the business of park home estates

**T**om Hartley started his car business at the tender age of 12, having had no formal school or college education apart from, as he puts it, 'experience in the university of life' with his mum and dad as his tutors. Today Tom (now 39) specialises in the buying and selling of performance and luxury super cars and last year had a turnover in excess of £70 million, maintaining his position as the UK's leading independent dealership. His current stock list contains Bentleys, a selection of Ferraris (including a very rare F50), not to mention a range of Porsches plus the odd Lamborghini or two. If he were ever to publish his customer list, it would read like a 'Who's Who?' of the rich and famous containing pop stars, sports people and foreign royalty. From his Derbyshire showroom, Tom deals nationally and internationally. The showroom is unique in being the only one in the country that is visited by appointment only, with security like Fort Knox!

Tom's family have owned residential parks since the early 1970s and it was only ill health that forced his father to retire in 1992. Helping Tom with his park homes business will be his wife and daughter, both called Priscilla. His sons Carl and Tom will oversee the running of the car business, although Tom will still have one hand on the steering wheel.

The Hartley family currently owns 18 residential parks, covering 1,480 plots and Tom himself owns four of these. However, he is determined to expand that number and invest heavily to become the number one individual park owner in the country. And, just like his car business, he wants the name 'Tom Hartley' to be synonymous with luxury park homes and beautiful parks.

**Lagoona Park**, pictured at the top of this page, is next to his car showroom

and is a small exclusive park for just ten homes. It is within walking distance of the National Forest.

**Amington Park**, in Tamworth, has 55 plots and is close to the Drayton Manor Theme Park. Amington is currently undergoing substantial redevelopment. Tom has recently signed an order with Omar Homes for 20 new twin unit homes (ten Oulton Excels and ten Sheringham Executives), which are expected to be sited before the end of this year, with homes being offered for sale in the early months of 2001. **Little Marsh Park** at Stafford has 38 plots with private moorings for residents on the canal running through it. **Barratt Mill Park**, also in Derbyshire, is currently undeveloped but has planning permission for 50 homes.

Tom Hartley is actively looking to expand across the Midlands to Bristol in the west, Peterborough in the east and London in the south and is seeking to invest in his current parks and to acquire new ones. 'You cannot buy reputation and trust, you have to earn them, and I am determined to earn them in the park homes business, as I have done in the motor trade where I have often been described as "King of the Road"; he said. He intends to be personally involved on all the parks and to visit them at least once a week. He will also be available by telephone to all residents and made the refreshing comment: 'I am paid the rents so I should deal with possible problems in my determination to gain another title—"King of the Parks".'

Tom says that he treats residents as he himself would expect to be treated, with respect. Local authorities have welcomed his plans because of the improvements that will be made to Amington Park.



Top picture: Tom Hartley with some of the prestigious cars from his showroom. Above: Lagoona Park

All of Tom Hartley's parks will be for semi-retired and retired residents without children and pets. The parks will be fully landscaped with generous spacing between homes to allow garages or parking bays. Satellite television will also be available. All these facilities will be designed to enable residents to enjoy ultimate tranquillity.

To help prospective residents purchase a park home, Tom Hartley will, if necessary, buy their existing properties, via his own property company, at market trade value.

To encourage pride in homes and gardens, Tom Hartley plans to introduce an annual best-kept garden competition on his parks, with free ground rent for a year for the winner. He is also considering entering his parks into the David Bellamy Conservation Award Scheme.

We plan to visit one or more of Tom Hartley's parks next spring and to publish a report and pictures so that readers can see for themselves the standards he is aiming for (and achieving).

## Information

Further information can be obtained from: Tom Hartley, 159 Moira Road, Overseal, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE12 6JD; ☎ 01283 762762. You can also check out his web site: [www.mobileparkhomes.co.uk](http://www.mobileparkhomes.co.uk). *Parts of this feature are reproduced by kind permission of the BH&HPA Journal*