



BARNSBURY Mews after the development. Pictured at the opening ceremony are (left to right) Jeff Lewis, secretary of the estate's tenants association, David Baker, chairman of the Barnsbury Housing Association, George Cunningham, MP for Islington South and Finsbury, and Ken Pring, the architect.

Miracle mews emerged from cleansing yard

By **CLELAND THOM**

The ever-changing face of Barnsbury — and these two pictures give you an idea of how quickly and how radically the area transforms.

The picture below shows the old Islington Council cleansing department in Lotting Road. It was taken in 1971. And the one above is of the same place, four years later, at the end of the Barnsbury Housing Association's redevelopment.

The new estate, called Barnsbury Mews, was opened officially by Mr George Cunningham, MP

for Islington South and Finsbury. The BHA acquired the site in November 1971 and worked commenced on it in December.

The first block was completed in December 1973 and the association took the decision that the flats would be occupied as they were completed rather than be left empty until the whole project was completed; which is one reason why there are no squatters on the estate.

The project is very high density, but is low-rise, arranged for the most part

in two and three storey blocks, with only one block of four storey flats. There are 176 people housed per acre.

The scheme provides 155 houses, flats and maisonettes and 90 garages. The buildings have been arranged round a mews access, courtyards and pedestrian alleyways, all of which have been landscaped.

The project was selected by the Civic Trust for display in connection with the International Conference for European Architectural Heritage Year as an example

of modern urban architecture which is sympathetic to its environment.

The funds for the development were provided by the GLC, who have the right to nominate 75 per cent of the tenants, a right which they share with Islington Council.

In fact 97 per cent of the tenants are council nominations of people who have been transferred from other Barnsbury Housing Association schemes whose vacated flats would have been occupied by a council nominee.

● **Top marks to the BHA... no marks to the GLC — Public Eye, page 17.**