

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Super Heroes in Denton



Photos available on application

Holy Cow! Residents of New Charter's Yew Tree estate couldn't believe their eyes as Batman and Robin the boy wonder raced in to town - on a landscaping mission.

The two superheroes were part of a group of tenants watching a 21<sup>st</sup> century grass-cutting machine put through its paces. The Batwing machine hadn't come all the way from Gotham City, but the less exotic home of Birmingham. Landlord New Charter and grounds maintenance contractor Serviceteam had borrowed the Batwing to see if it will help speed up grass cutting on larger areas next year. The Yew Tree estate was chosen as it has large grassed areas to maintain which give residents and visitors their main impression of the neighbourhood.

One of the residents brought in to see the Batwing perform, Connie O'Neill, said, "I volunteered to be part of New Charter's Environmental Strategy group looking at ways we



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can improve the upkeep of landscaped areas. The Batwing could get the larger areas done faster, and give the contractor more time to spend on smaller areas that matter most to residents. But I was knocked out by Batman and Robin's arrival this morning!"

The two super heroes posed briefly for photographs, before an urgent phone call from a Commissioner Gordon summoned the pair to another venue.

Julie Hardman, Chair of New Charter Housing (South) commented, "It's a novel way of engaging attention, but there's an important issue behind this. Our surveys highlight that customers are concerned to see improvement in their environment. We want to involve our customers in the improvement we can make".

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

1. New Charter formed in 1999 as the new landlords to own and manage nearly 16,400 properties transferred from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council in Greater Manchester. With a turnover of £49million a year and a workforce of almost 800, New Charter is one of the twenty largest Registered Social Landlords (RSL's), and is regulated by The Housing Corporation, a Government watchdog.
2. Serviceteam has provided grounds maintenance service to New Charter since July 2001. It has recently tendered and won to continue the service until 2007, with a further two-year option. Contract Manager Matt Ling heads local operations from a temporary base on the Broadway industrial estate in Hyde.
3. The machine trialled is a John Deere 1600 Turbo WAM professional grass cutter. It is nicknamed the Batwing because of its two large floating cutting arms. It can cut up to 8.5 acres an hour with a cutting width of 128 inches, and can travel at 14mph. It is used by several large clients including many golf clubs, sports clubs and stately homes.

## **CONTACTS:**

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