

PRESS RELEASE

19th February 2004

Customers congratulate New Charter



Photograph - Chief Executive listening to group available

Customer satisfaction with every service provided by New Charter is growing fast, according to an independent survey published this week.

New Charter is committed to finding out tenants' views and then acting on the issues raised. One of the ways we do this is by running large-scale opinion surveys. A respected, independent firm accredited by the British Market Research Association, ph Research Services based in Oldham interviewed 1000 tenants by telephone in January 2004.

The results show a remarkable improvement in satisfaction ratings from our tenants. Eight out of ten tenants now consider we are doing a good job – a 13% increase in just 12 months.



business for neighbourhoods

Tenants gave the thumbs up to the network of high street shops in Ashton, Hyde, Denton and Stalybridge. Facilities were rated good by 83% of those calling in to see us.

The quality of repairs was also a big hit with existing customers. New Charter attracted high ratings for everything from appointments to tidying up after completing jobs.

The promises made at the time of transfer – the Big Switch – were also being delivered, with almost 70% of tenants saying rents were good value for money. More than 60% of all tenants said their homes had already received improvements, and there was another increase to 85% in those satisfied with the upgrading. Customers were also very pleased with the opportunities they have to participate in New Charter – more than 73% were happy, which is one of the highest results country-wide.

Tenants gave a big vote of confidence to New Charter about the way they are kept informed. Nine out of ten rated the landlord as good, and there were similar increases in satisfaction with ease of contacting New Charter (85%) and taking tenants' views into account (87%). Eight out of ten were satisfied with how we manage their neighbourhood.

However, Group Chief Executive Ian Munro was not complacent. “There is still more work for us to do if we are to achieve our aim of being the best,” he said. “But I’m delighted with the judgements from customers. It shows they recognise the effort and hard work of our employees to become an excellent customer-focused business.”



Commenting on the results, Chair of New Charter Housing Trust, Ged Cooney said “The transformation of our services has been remarkable. We have been in business less than four years, and some results are exceptional. Customers have appreciated the efforts we have made and our all-round improvement. There’s no secret to this leap forward – we listen to previous surveys and change the way we do things. We’re committed to doing exactly that with this set of results. Thanks to all those tenants who gave us their views.”

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. New Charter commissioned ph Research of Oldham to interview a structured sample of 1000 tenants. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone from 17th to 31st January 2004. The maximum error range of this sample is +/- 2%. Full results will be posted on our website after presentations to tenants and Boards.
2. 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.
3. **iN business for neighbourhoods** is a major new campaign, through which housing associations and companies across England are demonstrating the positive difference they make to people's homes, communities and quality of life. New Charter is one of over 360 housing companies and associations supporting the initiative. Engaging customers in everything we do is part of our response to the **iN business for neighbourhoods** campaign. Our commitment to customers is to involve them at all levels within the business.

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