

PRESS RELEASE

24th February 2004

New Charter calls in the Cops



Photo opportunity – Police Constables Cropper and Willocks with Julie Hardman, Chair of New Charter Housing (South) and Taff Jeffery, Chair of Central Residents Action Group at 2 Warwick Terrace, Dukinfield at 12 noon – 12.30pm on Thursday 26th February 2004.

New Charter has joined forces with Greater Manchester Police in the latest service improvement for residents in North Dukinfield.

Local police officers will be available for crime prevention and general policing advice at the housing landlord's office on Central estate fortnightly from now on. The surgery starts on Thursday 26th February 2004.

The lunchtime drop-in is another example of the collaboration between New Charter and the police, two of the key partners in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Both organisations see the benefit for local residents of close working arrangements.



“Greater Manchester Police is working closely with New Charter to help combat crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in the community, tackling the minority who can give the area a bad name,” said PC Willocks.

“Setting up the drop-in sessions in partnership with New Charter gives local residents the opportunity to have their say to get crime prevention advice and shows them that we’re here, we’re looking and we’re listening”.

Responding, Julie Hardman, Chair of New Charter Housing (South), said, “As a tenant myself, I know the visible presence of the local police will be welcomed. I’m pleased we are showing what **iN business for neighbourhoods** is all about. New Charter is much more than good repairs and rent collection services. We aim to make every neighbourhood a better place to live by listening to residents and working with other agencies such as Greater Manchester Police.”

Taff Jeffrey, Chair of Central Residents Action Group (CRAG), said “I’m delighted that New Charter has got this drop-in surgery off the ground. I hope local people will use it. I’m certain the police will get to know the area better.”

The Warwick Terrace office is open on Tuesdays and Fridays for all local housing issues.



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. New Charter owns 369 homes on Central, 140 homes at Brunswick Street and a further 160 on Clarendon Fields, Moffat Court and Crescent Close. We will leaflet all these Dukinfield homes by Thursday about this service.
3. This new service will not cost our tenants. However, Home Secretary David Blunkett put forward the idea that the public could pay extra for local policing initiatives at the New Local Government Network conference on 22nd January 2004 and in an interview in The Times. See http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/n_story.asp?item_id=779
4. **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. Partnership with Greater Manchester Police is part of our response to the **iN business for neighbourhoods** campaign. Our commitment to customers is to do everything we can to prevent neighbourhood problems, and deal firmly with people who are bad neighbours.
5. This new service is also a success for the Tameside Strategic Partnership, a board made up of near 30 members from local business, the voluntary and community sector and key public bodies. Through consultation with local people, it creates and then implements the Tameside Community Strategy – a three-year plan to improve the quality of life for local people. It was set up in 2000 and meets three times a year. It ensures actions are taken within six key areas, including: *A safe environment – cutting crime and disorder.*

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