

PRESS RELEASE

1st April 2004

Joined up first!

New Charter Housing Trust Group is the first landlord in the country to use new powers to tackle anti social behaviour.

Some provisions in the 2003 Anti Social Behaviour Act only came into effect on Wednesday 31st March 2004, and the Greater Manchester landlord was quick off the mark.

New Charter was among those who consulted their tenants and lobbied Government for changes in the law to take action more quickly. The Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 section 85 allows landlords to add another person or people ('join a party') to existing Court proceedings for the purposes of getting an Anti Social Behaviour Order.

Action to obtain possession of the home of a tenant, Ronnie Brookes of Smallshaw Lane in Ashton-under-Lyne was already underway, when tenancy enforcement officers spotted a new arrival. A former tenant with a history of bad behaviour was causing trouble in the



locality. Laura Hetherington, who has two suspended sentences from a previous address, is believed to be living at the Smallshaw address and allegedly causing nuisance in the neighbourhood.

New Charter filed an action to join Hetherington to the existing proceedings the day the new powers came into effect. This avoids the substantial time spent in entering a fresh action, and will bring the matter to Court much more quickly.

The case against Brookes and Hetherington is listed for Tameside County Court on Wednesday 21st April 2004.

New Charter's Director of Tenancy Services, Tony Powell said, "The vast majority of our customers enjoy the peace and quiet of their neighbourhood. We lobbied Government for changes such as this, and we are determined to use every possible route to deal firmly with anti social behaviour. Being so quick off the mark is further evidence of our commitment".

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. Ronnie Brookes, 213 Smallshaw Lane, Ashton-under-Lyne, dob 13.06.48. New Charter entered an action to seek possession in Court on 20.02.04.
3. Laura Hetherington, dob 26.01.83 was formerly the tenant of 41 Hope Street, Ashton-under-Lyne. Her tenancy was ended at Oldham County Court on 17th February 2004.



She received two suspended sentences for her contempt in breaching injunctions to control her behaviour. See New Charter press release “No show, no home” issued 18th February 2004, available from our website www.newcharter.co.uk

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. We've made a commitment to neighbourhoods, customers and excellence. Our commitment to customers is to do everything we can to prevent neighbourhood problems, and to deal firmly with people who are bad neighbours.

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