

PRESS RELEASE

21st April 2004

Drink ban success

A woman who promoted underage drinking and caused nuisance across north Ashton has become the latest person served with a banning order.

The action is also the latest success for New Charter who is the first landlord in the country to succeed in using new powers to tackle anti social behaviour.

Section 85 of the 2003 Anti Social Behaviour Act only came into effect on Wednesday 31st March 2004, and the Greater Manchester landlord entered a case into Court that day. The power allows landlords to join another to existing proceedings, speeding up the process.

Action to obtain possession of the home of Ronnie Brookes, a tenant on Smallshaw Lane in Ashton-under-Lyne was already underway, when Laura Hetherington showed up. Hetherington is a former tenant who has two suspended sentences from a previous address and was causing trouble in the locality.



The case against Brookes and Hetherington was heard on Wednesday 21st April 2004 at Tameside County Court. Brookes was deferred to a later date, but District Judge Gaunt issued an interim Anti-Social Behaviour Order forbidding Hetherington from causing nuisance, congregating in groups of three or more people and restricting her supplying alcohol to minors.

New Charter's Head of Neighbourhood, Steve Hodson was delighted with the speedy action. He said, "We were quick off the mark to use the new powers and I'm pleased for our customers that the Court has supported our application. Hetherington was a nuisance in both the Hurst Cross and Smallshaw neighbourhoods. Any breach of the Order could mean a spell in prison".

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, and "Joined up first" issued 1st April 2004 available from our website www.newcharter.co.uk
4. The terms of the order are Laura Hetherington must not:
 1. Engage in conduct which causes or is likely to cause alarm, distress or harassment to others or inciting or encouraging others to do so within England and Wales;



2. Engage in behaviour which is or is likely to be threatening, abusive or insulting to others, or encouraging others to do so within England and Wales;
3. Congregate in groups of three or more persons in a manner that causes or is likely to cause nuisance, annoyance and/or harassment to others.
4. Buy, attempt to buy or otherwise provide alcohol to persons under the age of 18.

This order is in force until 21st April 2005.

If without reasonable excuse, Hetherington does anything which she must not do so by reason of this order she will be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years or to a fine or both.

5. 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.
6. **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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