

PRESS RELEASE

7th January 2005

Rewarding loyal customers



Photographs available of first winner Andrea Wilding, Group Chief Executive Ian Munro and ASDA representatives

2005 promises to be a rewarding experience for good tenants of landlord New Charter. The groundbreaking Greater Manchester landlord launches something extra to show how much it values good customers.

The new scheme has exclusive rewards only available to loyal customers. Already, over 7,700 tenants have enrolled to take advantage of valuable extras, free gifts and prize draws. New Charter expects that more tenants will be drawn to become part of the exciting new incentive.

From January 15th 2005, the new scheme – *thancs!* from New Charter – will counter the view that landlords spend all their time dealing with bad tenants. Some tenant incentive schemes are administratively costly to run, and focus on punishment and withdrawal of service. New Charter consulted its tenants, and found broad support for an incentive



business for neighbourhoods

scheme that was simple to run and concentrated on thanking good customers – hence the name.

Group Chief Executive Ian Munro commented, ‘We have many customers who pay their rent on time, behave in a neighbourly way and follow the spirit of their tenancy agreement. We want to recognise that loyalty. The tradition of our business does mean we spend a lot of time with the minority of bad tenants. Rent arrears, rechargeable repairs and anti-social behaviour take up much of our time and energy. Like all good businesses, I want to show we are listening and responding to our good customers. ***Thanks!*** is a great way to do this’.

The January issue of tenants’ newsletter ‘New Charter News’ carries details of rewards on offer. New Charter linked up with ASDA Ashton to launch the exclusive *thanks!* prize draws, with £500 worth of shopping on offer. First prize winner Andrea Wilding of Ashton-under-Lyne was delighted. ‘I’ve never won anything before,’ she said, ‘and it’s such a bonus with all the recent expense of Christmas. I think it’s great New Charter is thanking good tenants’.

New Charter will develop the scheme over the next few months to offer rewards which tenants can apply for to benefit their neighbourhood. ‘We want to recognise community spirit, and help good tenants to make living in New Charter homes more rewarding’ said Ian Munro.

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 almost £60million a year and a workforce of 800, New Charter is one of the country's largest Registered Social Landlords, and is regulated by The Housing Corporation, a Government watchdog.
2. Qualifying customers receive a gold *thancs!* Card. With our Christmas 2004 thank you letter to all those with clear rent accounts, we enrolled many tenants into the scheme. We do expect tenants to keep to their tenancy agreement, so not everyone with a clear rent account was enrolled.
3. To become a *thancs!* cardholder, tenants of New Charter homes:
 - must apply to New Charter.
 - must have a clear rent account.
 - must not have breached tenancy conditions.New tenants must have satisfactorily completed their probationary period.
Tenants who are employees of New Charter are ineligible for individual benefits and prizes.
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 400 housing companies and associations supporting the initiative. We've made a commitment to neighbourhoods, customers and excellence. For customers, we acknowledge they are the driving force behind our business. We are committed to offering them respect, choice and support.

CONTACTS:

David Rigby or Paula Thomas - New Charter Publicity 0161 331 2000

ENDS