

PRESS RELEASE

25th February 2005

Ratings rocket!



Photographs of Chair Ged Cooney and Group Chief Executive Ian Munro 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 2005.

The results show a remarkable improvement in satisfaction ratings from our tenants. Nearly nine out of ten tenants now consider we are doing a good job – an increase of over 10% in just 12 months. And almost half these customers said they were “**very** satisfied”.



business for neighbourhoods

The quality of repairs was also a big hit with existing customers, increasing from 73% last year to 80%. New Charter attracted high ratings for everything from appointments to tidying up after completing jobs.

Customers were also very pleased with the opportunities they have to participate in New Charter – 87% were happy, which is one of the highest results country-wide.

More than three-quarters of those surveyed said New Charter rents were value for money. A separate survey by the Housing Corporation found New Charter rents were £8 a week cheaper than other housing associations locally.

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.

And 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 (92%) and taking tenants' views into account (90%). More tenants were satisfied with how we manage their neighbourhood, with our rating increasing to 84%.

Chair of New Charter Housing Trust, Cllr. Ged Cooney said: "I thought our results last year were very good, so to see such improvement over the last year is extremely pleasing for the Board. Everyone who works for us has contributed to this success over the near

five years we've been in business. As with every survey, we'll study the detail of these results and use these to change the way we do things. I want to thank all those tenants who gave their views".

Group Chief Executive Ian Munro was also delighted – but not complacent. "It is still possible to improve further; we'll need to do this 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."

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 2005. 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 homes 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. It owns just under 14,900 homes.
3. **iN business for neighbourhoods** is a long-term project to improve housing associations' performance, and challenge negative perceptions of the sector and its customers. The project was launched at the National Housing Federation's annual conference in 2003. To date, 75 per cent of the sector's stock – over 1.4 million homes – is managed by associations who have joined the initiative and made fresh commitments to neighbourhoods, customers and excellence.

CONTACTS:

David Rigby or Kevin Mahoney - New Charter Publicity 0161 331 2000

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