

PRESS RELEASE

23rd August 2005

Race hate caught on camera



Photographs from CCTV and of damage available on application

A Stockport man is serving four months in prison for a series of race hate crimes, after he was identified following an appeal in a local newspaper.

New Charter and Greater Manchester Police turned to the local paper to appeal to the community for a lead, after initial enquiries drew a blank. At Tameside Magistrates Court, Philip Wigley of Campbell Street in Reddish, Stockport pleaded guilty to charges of racially aggravated criminal damage and was sentenced to four months. Wigley was also found guilty of four counts of criminal damage, for each of which he received a one month jail term to be served concurrently.

Late last year, a series of racist damage attacks took place targeting an Asian tenant who lived in Chartist House, a multistorey block of flats in Hyde town centre. New Charter's



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tenancy compliance team set up covert video surveillance and captured Wigley on film. After discussion with the police, the “Tameside Reporter” was asked to carry the story and photograph. New Charter offered a reward for identification, and Wigley was named by a member of the public.

Director of Tenancy Services at New Charter, Tony Powell said: “Our tenant was left terrified after these late night attacks, but our partnership with local police meant we could combine our detection efforts. Initially we believed the culprit would be local to Hyde, but thanks to the newspaper coverage, we brought the image to a wider public. Good policing work was able to eventually link Wigley to the offences, and we’re pleased at the sentence. We and the police have zero tolerance to racially motivated incidents.”

Inspector Trevor Hoyne said: “We asked the media to help in this way, because we had a great video image from New Charter. Our house-to-house and other enquiries had drawn a blank, but we were determined to bring this man in front of the court. It’s another excellent example of success that our partnership with New Charter brings”.

Clare Wallace, Deputy Editor of the Tameside Reporter said: “Every local newspaper serving the public has a social responsibility to help bring criminals to justice.

”This was a heinous act of victimisation, and as a community-based newspaper we were proud to be able to assist and highlight the efforts the police and New Charter had made to apprehend this individual. The Tameside Reporter will continue to provide an accurate and

balanced overview of news and promote the zero tolerance attitude adopted by New Charter to such race-hate crimes. We are pleased to be able to work closely with the police and other agencies to keep the people of Tameside fully informed about such incidents and we will continue to help with all related appeals.”

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. New Charter took the whole council housing stock of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council in Greater Manchester on 27th March 2000. 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. It now owns 14,600 homes.
2. Philip Wigley, 57 years old of Campbell Street in Reddish, Stockport
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, 80 per cent of the sector’s stock – over 1.5 million homes – is managed by associations who have joined the initiative and made fresh commitments to neighbourhoods, customers and excellence.

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