

PRESS RELEASE

5th October 2005

Taken to the skies



Photographs available on application

“Brilliant!” That was the verdict of our latest *thancs!* winner, Mrs Elaine Winkley of Denton, after her helicopter ride of a lifetime.

David Orr, Chief Executive of the National Housing Federation and our Group Chief Executive Ian Munro joined Elaine and her daughter Rachael on the flight. After being chauffeured to Manchester Airport, we took our lucky winner on a flight across many of our homes – and the highlight was hovering over her own house on Edward Street, Denton. “It was like going over a huge bridge”, said Elaine of her flight. “I’ve only even flown in a plane once, so it was really exciting”.

The trip was the first prize in our quarterly rewards draw, and Mrs Winkley was drawn from all those *thancs!* cardholders with a birthday on October 5th – the day of our helicopter charter.



business for neighbourhoods

David Orr was our guest in the afternoon as he had asked to see what transfer landlords were doing in the North West. From the air he could see the work we are doing in neighbourhoods, and was delighted to meet Elaine. She was able to tell him how things were since 1993 when she moved in, and the changes that we have been able to make since 2000. Once back on the ground, David Orr went on to tour New Charter's homeless reception centre, Gibson Terrace in Ashton-under-Lyne.

Group Chief Executive Ian Munro was pleased to make Elaine's day so special. He said: "Our *thancs!* scheme is about changing the relationship between tenants and us, the landlord. Most of our tenants pay their rent on time, are good neighbours and a credit to our communities. Inevitably we have to deal with the few tenants who won't behave, but like all good businesses, we want to show that we care about good customers."

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. Elaine Winkley is 43 today. She is married with two daughters and one son, and has lived in her Denton home since 1993.
3. Two other tenants will also be taking to the skies with Pennine Helicopters. We are running a competition in our next tenants' newsletter.
4. Our *thancs!* programme provides a mixture of rewards for individuals and neighbourhoods. Tenants who are not already cardholders can apply by ringing us on 0161 331 2400.

5. **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.

CONTACTS:

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

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