

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Award is 'Magic'!



Photographs available on application

There was no trickery involved in getting our latest award, but guests at the presentation of the Sheltered Housing Code of Practice were entertained by a professional magician.

James Purnell MP for Stalybridge and Hyde, and Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport was on hand to present the award, the latest external endorsement for the quality of our services for tenants.

The Code of Practice from the Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies (CSHS) is recognised as the sector equivalent of a Charter Mark. New Charter is the only landlord in this area to get the prestigious award.



**business for neighbourhoods**

Mr Purnell took time to chat to some of the staff, tenants and Board members who had worked hard to get the award. He took the opportunity to praise the wider contribution to the local community which New Charter has made since forming less than six years ago.

Group Chief Executive of New Charter Ian Munro was delighted to get the standard, and to hear the MP's compliments. He said: 'We know our customers of sheltered housing think we provide an excellent service from our independent survey results. Getting the Code of Practice confirms the high standards we believe we have for all our sheltered and supported housing. I am justifiably proud of the people we employ, especially our Care Services team who has achieved so much.'

Afterwards, former Young Magician of the Year Nick Rushton's unique style of close-up magic astonished those attending.

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. New Charter took the whole council housing stock of Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council in Greater Manchester on 27<sup>th</sup> 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. The **Code of Practice** is administered and co-ordinated by Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies (CSHS) and is a specific 'Kite Mark' for the sheltered housing service, similar to Investor in People or Charter Mark.

CSHS received official endorsement of the Code in December 2002 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the government department responsible for implementing Supporting People. This confirms the Code's status as **the industry standard for excellence**.

3. Achievement of the Code of Practice demanded close collaboration with our Care Services staff, a thorough review of internal policies and procedures, and often rigorous

reworking of existing practice. We had to show clear policies and procedures covering 10 areas:

- equality of opportunity and diversity
- confidentiality
- rights and responsibilities
- independence and empowerment
- service delivery, review and continual improvement
- policy and legislation
- trained and supported staff
- physical environment
- professional role and responsibilities
- collaboration and community development

All our 22 scheme coordinators and support staff helped by giving practical examples and evidence of what we do. Staff and some residents were interviewed by the assessor.

4. Continual Improvement and Efficiency principles and the government's agenda for older people are fully integrated within the Code. Compliance with the Code enables New Charter to demonstrate compliance with the Quality Assessment Framework applied under Supporting People.
5. See more of Nick Rushton at <http://www.witnessthemagic.co.uk>
6. **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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