

PRESS RELEASE

10th February 2006

Top of the big league!



Portrait photographs of Chair Ged Cooney and Group Chief Executive Ian Munro available

Customer satisfaction with New Charter has now placed the landlord at the top of the English league table of large landlords, according to results out this week.

An independent survey showed nine out of ten tenants now consider we are doing a good job. And half of all customers said they were “**very satisfied**”. This puts New Charter at the top of the satisfaction league table for landlords with more than 5,000 homes.

Customers were also very pleased with the opportunities they have to participate in New Charter – 89% were happy, which is also the highest result country-wide.



business for neighbourhoods

These two headline results are important because every housing association has to publish them, allowing the comparisons to be made.

A respected, independent firm accredited by the British Market Research Association, ph Research Services based in Oldham interviewed 1000 tenants by telephone in January 2006. They asked tenants questions about the services New Charter offers as well as asking them to rate their landlord.

The results show another remarkable improvement in satisfaction ratings from our tenants.

The quality of repairs was a big hit with existing customers, increasing again to 82%. New Charter attracted high ratings for everything from appointments to tidying up after completing jobs. This is a double success, as almost all repairs are done by our own New Charter Building Company.

Tenants were really pleased with many of the improvements made to their homes. And almost half said they felt more safe in their homes because of this investment. The improvements are clearly helping to create stable and sustainable communities, as less than 2% of tenants said they would like to move in the near future.

Four out of five tenants said New Charter rents were value for money. A separate survey by the Housing Corporation found New Charter rents were £6.50 a week cheaper than other housing associations locally.

Our ratings were above 90% for ease of contact, keeping tenants informed and our revenues (rent collection and recovery).

Chair of New Charter Housing Trust, Councillor Ged Cooney said: “When we formed New Charter, we planned to be the best. To get there in just six years is fantastic! Everyone who works for us has contributed to this success, and it’s immensely pleasing to the Boards. As with every survey, there are some things for us to learn and improve still further. But I think the secret of our success is the way we have used customer opinion to change how we work.”

Group Chief Executive Ian Munro was also delighted – but not complacent. “It’s getting harder to increase our ratings each year. But just because our results are the best in the country, there will be no letting up on our desire to improve even further,” he said. “I’m delighted with the judgements from customers, especially as half of all customers say they are very satisfied. It shows they recognise the effort and hard work of our employees to become an excellent customer-focused business. Our commitment to being **iN business for neighbourhoods** is clearly pleasing our tenants.”

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. 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. With the incorporation of Aksa Housing Association recently, the Group owns just over 15,100 homes.

2. New Charter commissioned ph Research of Oldham to interview a structured sample of 1000 tenants. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone from 9th to 23rd January 2006. The maximum error range of this sample is +/- 1.56%. Full results will be posted on our website after presentations to tenants and Boards.
3. The 90% and 89% results were compared to the satisfaction indicators for all housing associations recently published by the Housing Corporation on www.housingpis.co.uk
4. Satisfaction ratings are measured on a five-point scale (very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied).
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.

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