

PRESS RELEASE

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Landlord trashes own home

A private landlord whose campaign of harassment culminated with illegal eviction and trashing his tenants' flat has been hit with fines and costs of over £5,000.

In a unique move, Tameside Council appointed New Charter, the area's biggest landlord to take civil action against Victor Nasarau, the landlord of the flat on Ruby Street in Denton, under section 28 of the Housing Act 1988.

The tenant, Ms A, was expecting her first child at the time. Tameside County Court heard that she and her partner were subjected to a catalogue of intimidation and unpleasantries by Nasarau. He disconnected the electricity and water supplies to the first floor flat and had verbally threatened Ms A, before illegally changing the locks and forcing them to seek help from the Housing Options Centre.

An injunction failed to stop Nasarau from then trashing the flat to ensure the tenant was not able to return.

Greater Manchester Police brought separate criminal charges of harassment and withdrawing services unlawfully to which Nasarau pleaded guilty, but it was the ensuing civil action which cost him dear.

His breaches of the Tenancy Agreement meant the Court awarded Ms A special damages of £330 and general damages of £500, plus interest.

Nasarau was also ordered to pay New Charter's costs of £4,457.80 by District Judge Stockton

New Charter's Director of Tenancy Services, Tony Powell said: 'Illegal evictions are not acceptable and the Court's decision should be a warning for any private landlord who resorts to harassment of tenants. The case came to our attention through the Housing Options Centre on Old Street in Ashton-under-Lyne, a service we provide under contract to the Council. We were pleased to be entrusted by Tameside with taking civil action against the landlord, and the professionalism of our legal team ensured the right result. We have a



wider role in this community than just offering homes for rent. It's yet another example of New Charter being in business for neighbourhoods."

Andrew Leah, Tameside Council's Housing Services Manager said: "We've seen a doubling of privately rented homes in the Borough to 8%, fuelled by Buy to Let mortgages and investment opportunities. There are good private landlords in Tameside, but for the unscrupulous, the Court decision should be a powerful reminder that we will act to protect the rights of tenants."

Nasarau, who was in Court for the judgement, was told to pay up by 12th June 2007.

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 £48million 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. By incorporating Aksa Housing Association recently, the Group owns over 15,000 homes.
2. New Charter took action under section 28 of the Housing Act 1988.
3. **iN business for neighbourhoods** is a long-term project highlighting housing associations' performance. As social businesses, housing associations do not make profit. They offer homes for rent and sale at prices local people can afford. Housing associations provide more than homes - they help create places where people want to live. Wherever you see the **iN business for neighbourhoods** sign, something great is happening in the area. Housing Associations who display this logo are committed to their customers, the neighbourhoods they work in and strive for excellence in everything they do.

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