

PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

26th June 2007

Fire at Assheton House, Ashton



Location picture available

New Charter regrets to confirm that one person has died following a fire in a town centre block of flats.

A serious fire was discovered in one of the bedrooms of a flat on the ninth (top) floor of Assheton House in Water Street Ashton-under-Lyne around 2am yesterday morning (Monday 25th June).

The fire was confined to the flat, but two adjacent flats on the ninth floor are believed to be smoke damaged. Two flats on the eighth floor suffered water damage as firefighters tackled the blaze.

Barbara Bardsley (67) and husband Alan were both taken to Tameside General Hospital suffering from smoke inhalation. Sadly, Mrs Bardsley died last night.

Fire, police and forensic investigators were at the flat to determine the cause of the fire.

Some residents on the eighth and ninth floors were evacuated as a precaution, and two older residents from adjacent flats were taken to hospital but not detained.

We have arranged emergency accommodation for the residents who are unable to return to their flats.

One resident on the ninth floor who slept through the incident told us she did not realise there had been a fire until she saw a police officer on the corridor at breakfast time. Vera Anderton said: "I could not smell smoke even then, and believe the three internal fire doors (on each floor corridor) protected me from the incident. But I know that that if a fire should break elsewhere in the block, I should remain in my flat until the fire service gives the all-clear."

Our sympathies are with Mr Bardsley and the family.



business for neighbourhoods

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 15,000 homes.
2. **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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