

PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

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Droylsden neighbourhood in running for Top Award



Photographs of estate available

A New Charter housing estate which sits opposite the historic Moravian settlement in Droylsden could be crowned most improved neighbourhood in a top national awards ceremony this week.

Fairfield estate is in the running for the title of "Peaceful and Better Neighbourhood" in the National Housing Federation's Neighbourhood Awards 2007.

Built in 1984, Fairfield comprises 106 homes, a mix of houses, flats and bungalows. Subsequently, inherent design faults were uncovered. When Tameside Council transferred the homes in 2000, New Charter inherited the problems.

Most bin stores at the front of homes were not keyed into the main fabric of the buildings. The quality of construction materials used for some homes was poor. Legal wranglings between parties meant many homes were temporarily propped, and this added to a feeling of neglect. Anti-social behaviour stigmatised the estate.

But that was then – not now. A concerted effort from landlord and tenants has changed the physical and social environment of Fairfield. New Charter was greatly helped by an active and committed tenants' association. Fairfield has become a place where people want and choose to live.

New Charter's Director of Tenancy Services, Tony Powell said: "A combination of poor construction and protracted legal arguments meant residents felt no pride in their neighbourhood. We were able to convert that into the success story you see today by involving and working with our tenants. The physical repairs helped, but a successful neighbourhood is about people. Those who caused anti social behaviour have been removed, thanks to tenants who stood



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up to give evidence, and the help of the police and the courts. It would be fitting for Fairfield to get this award."

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 £53million a year and a workforce of 800, New Charter is one of the region'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. The Neighbourhood Awards, originally known as the iNbiz awards, are unique because they are judged by tenants from across the country. One overall winner is selected from among the category winners by a panel of experts in their field.
See <http://www.neighbourhoodawards.org.uk/>
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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