

PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

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Going for the double?

Tenants of New Charter Housing Trust Group have a double gardening triumph in their sights. Last year, tenant Irvin Chappell of Chester Avenue, Dukinfield won the landlord's contest and then went on to scoop the overall Tameside best garden title. And tenants are being urged to keep the title in New Charter!

The Mayor of Tameside, Councillor Michael Smith was so impressed with last year's winner he made a special visit to Irvin's garden. But contest rules don't allow the overall winner to enter for the following twelve months, so Irvin must hand over the trophy. The good news for everyone else is the field is wide open, with special prizes in the new categories:

- Best Small Garden (less than 50m²)
- Best Large Garden (more than 50m²)
- Best Specialist Garden
- Best Patio/Yard/Frontage
- Best Commercial/Neighbourhood entry
- Best Garden with specific requirements
- Best Balcony
- Best Planters /Hanging Baskets/Window Box
- Best Young Gardener (under 16)

New Charter's supreme champion is picked from these category winners and is awarded the Barry Engledow Cup, a magnificent silver trophy named after a popular member of staff who died suddenly in 2006.

Gardeners have simply to decide which category they wish to enter and send a photograph of their handiwork with their contact details by June 20th.

To encourage tenants to play their part in Tameside's overall entry, New Charter is giving away packets of seeds to its loyalty card customers. More than £500 worth of seeds will shortly be available at New Charter's four shops in the area for *thancs!* cardholders to collect.



Alongside the contest, some neighbourhoods are really pitching in. Residents on Central estate in Dukinfield have been awarded In Bloom prizes for the last two years, and will be joined this year by entries from estates in Droylsden and Denton.

New Charter's Deputy Chief Executive Martin Frost said: "Our garden competition has blossomed over the last six years, and we hope to top the 450 entries we had in 2007. We also get mystery nominations made by our staff, who spot some of the modest gardeners and enter on their behalf.

"This complements the massive investment we continue to make in our homes and neighbourhoods. We were delighted that one of our tenants won the best garden in Tameside last year, and encourage all our customers to help Tameside win Britain in Bloom this year."

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, the Group owns 15,000 homes.
2. New Charter has run a garden competition each year since 2003. Our spring newsletter invites tenants to enter by submitting a photo, and the judges shortlist and visit. The closing date is June 20th 2008.
3. The judges for New Charter include Gordon Clayton (New Charter), Matt Ling (ServiceTeam), Dave Griffin (Trevor Bridge Associates) and a tenants' representative
4. **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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