

PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

24th July 2008

Brushes sweep the Board!



Related photograph opportunity at 'Baileys Backs' (access between 9 & 11 Tudor Avenue), Brushes, Stalybridge SK15 3EL from 1 – 3.30pm on Saturday 26th July 2008

A community success in Stalybridge has achieved national fame with the award of a Green Pennant from the Civic Trust.

Brushes Estate Management Board is the first Tenant Management Organisation in Britain to win the prestigious honour. The Board's management of 'Baileys Backs', a large recreational area surrounded by some of the estate's 266 homes, emerged as a winner following a searching inspection at the end of May.

Brushes is one of a dozen winners in the North West. Across England, a record 73 green spaces have been rewarded with a Green Pennant, the highest national accolade for sites managed by voluntary and community groups.

The Estate Management Board (EMB) was a product of tenants and landlord New Charter working together to set up the first tenant management organisation from a transfer housing association. Since 2003, tenants and residents have undertaken some of the housing management responsibilities, and have also developed social life in the neighbourhood.

Brian Rawlings from Brushes EMB said: "We've gone from strength to strength as a Board, and Baileys Backs has been our biggest single project. Our determination has been recognised by the Green Pennant which we will fly with pride. We feel entitled to celebrate!

"Since the Multi Use Games Area was completed, children of all ages have a safe play environment and it's well used. The hard work of residents planting



hundreds of bulbs and plants last autumn also shows the commitment of our neighbourhood to managing the land.”

Deputy Chief Executive at New Charter Martin Frost said: “The unique partnership we have with Brushes Estate Management Board has paid dividends. Our massive investment in these homes has been matched by locally run management which reflects what is important to this neighbourhood. The EMB is strong in bringing people together and improving the quality of life for the community. Our congratulations go to those volunteers whose hard work and dedication has brought this award of excellence.”

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Baroness Andrews announced the winners. She said: “I would like to congratulate all those whose hard work has resulted in this year’s green flag winners. In our busy modern lives, parks and green spaces are invaluable as areas where young and old can come together to relax, exercise and play.”

Brushes achievement was recognised at a major ceremony in Liverpool on Thursday 24th July. The EMB plans a celebration day for all residents on Saturday 26th July.

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 £57million a year and a workforce of almost 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. The Green Pennant Award is under the umbrella of the Green Flag Award scheme. Any green space freely accessible to the public is eligible to enter and awards are given each year. Winners must apply each year to maintain high standards.
3. The Green Flag Award scheme, launched in 1996, is managed by the Civic Trust on behalf of Communities and Local Government and the Green Flag Advisory Board.
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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