

PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

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voxPod unveiled at New Charter

Pictures available

Tenants can tell it to our faces as an innovative way of collecting customer views is piloted at our Ashton-under-Lyne shop.

The self-operated touch screen technology captures tenant opinion on video at the point of transaction. The kit is also portable so can be taken to tenant events. And to show it is child's play to use, nine year-old Natalia, grandson of tenant Board member Taff Jeffery came along to test it out!

The prototype technology, codenamed voxPod, is a product of Tenant TV and local Failsworth company, adxba. They chose New Charter because of our position leading tenant satisfaction for the last four years. We've refined the concept and the hardware to fit the social housing market.

Tenants can use it to compliment good service, record frustration or tell us their ideas how New Charter can improve. In its first few days of use, the voxPod is proving a hit with some customers who liken it to the Big Brother video room!

Martin Frost, Deputy Chief Executive at New Charter said: "We've had other offers to install products which collect tenant opinion, but this one caught our eye. It wasn't in production, and the companies developing it wanted a leading housing organisation to refine the concept and the hardware to fit the social housing market. By piloting it, we're getting feedback from our tenants and staff which will improve the voxPod before it hits the market next month."

Mark Harris from Tenant TV said: "Communication is a two way thing. It's about giving tenants a voice and a chance to have a say. Our voxPod opens up a real channel of communication between customers and housing providers."



Tim Dixon from adxba said: "adxba are excited to be involved with the voxPod project. The system integrates video capture, web streaming and accessible touch technologies to provide a unique form of customer feedback. Development will also include anonymous voting and opinion polls as well as internet connectivity. New Charter has kindly provided us with an ideal piloting environment."

Other national attempts are underway to collect tenant opinion on video, but the voxPod collects tenant opinion continuously. New Charter plans to use the test results to understand more about customers' views of its services. It hopes it can improve its 93% satisfaction rating still further.

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 £59million a year and a workforce of 840, New Charter is one of the region's largest Registered Social Landlords, and is regulated by the Tenant Services Authority, a Government watchdog. By incorporating Gedling Homes, the Group owns 18,600 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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