

PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

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Four at nine for New Charter



Photographs of Chair Ged Cooney and Group Chief Executive Ian Munro available

New Charter is nine years old today. There may be gloom and doom elsewhere in the housing market, but it celebrates by publishing its latest survey on satisfaction scores. And with overall satisfaction at 93%, it tops the league table for overall satisfaction rating of all large landlords in England - for the fourth year running!

The independent survey of 1000 New Charter Homes' tenants was conducted in January and February over the telephone by PH Research of Oldham. Overall satisfaction is actually up one percentage point from last year, although the difference is not statistically significant.

The remarkable run has put the landlord ahead of some of the best performers in Britain. The consumer magazine "Which" reports the BEST supermarket for customer satisfaction as Waitrose (87%) the BEST of the big four (Sainsburys) 61% and the BEST high street bank as the Cooperative (81%). The JD Power survey of all new cars rated Lexus the BEST manufacturer (87%). But New Charter beats them all.

Chair of New Charter Housing Trust, Ged Cooney said: "This is fantastic news for the organisation! There is no large landlord better than us. It shows the strength of staff committed to delivering an excellent service. I want to thank every one of them and the Board of Directors for their efforts."

There's even better news in the detail. A groundbreaking 60% of all New Charter tenants say they are "very satisfied". And ratings over 95% were awarded to the helpfulness, politeness and professionalism of staff.



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Two other published results are available which can be directly compared with the rest of the housing associations in England.

On repairs and maintenance, New Charter's rating continues as one of the best – 86% satisfied. Again, 60% of all customers are "very satisfied". Most repair work is done by New Charter's own Building Company, based in Dukinfield.

And when asked "How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your views are being taken into account by New Charter?", 84% say they are satisfied (48% "very satisfied"). This is a new question which all housing associations must now ask and publish, so an immediate comparison will have to wait until the end of the year. But New Charter has asked this question and published the result for the last few years, so knows it has increased since its 2008 score of 80.5%.

Group Chief Executive Ian Munro was also delighted. "General doom and gloom does have an influence on general sentiment. Asking people's opinions on anything against a backdrop of bad news or economic uncertainty will usually deflate the results. But our customers have risen above this to tell us how pleased they are with our services.

"This result is not just leading the sector we work in. It beats or stands comparison with the best customer experiences in any sector. It's down to every one of my staff - but they know we intend to improve even further."

The commendation from its customers follows on from staff satisfaction at New Charter. Earlier this month, it was named at no.52 in the Sunday Times Best Companies To Work For 2009.

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. New Charter commissioned PH Research of Oldham to interview a structured sample of 1000 tenants. Fieldwork was conducted by telephone between 19th January and 10th February 2009. The maximum error range of this sample is +/-1.58% at 95% confidence limits. The survey is STATUS compliant. Full results will be posted on our website after presentations to tenants and Boards.



3. The precise results are 92.6, 84.5% and 86.2% but are rounded to nearest whole numbers to compare to the satisfaction indicators for all housing associations published by Government regulator and successor to the Housing Corporation, the Tenant Services Authority on: <http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.15766>
4. Satisfaction ratings are measured on a five-point scale (very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied).
5. Large landlords are those who own and manage more than 5000 homes.
6. **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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