



PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

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Benefit boost to local economy

There's more money in local pockets, thanks to a campaign by New Charter to get people the benefits to which they are entitled.

Last summer, New Charter contacted all 4,000 tenants who received no help with their housing costs. Almost 200 took up the offer to have their entitlement checked and we found over half were missing out on a staggering amount of assistance.

Tenants were not getting the housing benefit they should, but a significant number weren't claiming the working tax credit their circumstances entitled them to. Trained staff ran a check-up for each case and followed up by helping tenants complete claims.

One of New Charter's tenants, a retired construction manager found he was missing out on his entitlement. "I'd applied before and been turned down. When the leaflet came through my door, I felt it couldn't hurt to ask for a check-up. I was surprised when New Charter told me I would get help with housing costs and council tax. I now get an extra £68 a week which helps me with the additional costs of supporting my disabled daughter. I'd encourage any tenant to follow up New Charter's invitation."

The campaign resulted in £250,000 additional income yearly for tenants, but more was to come. In November, the government changed the rules on child benefit, so another targeted campaign found more than 50 families who now have an extra annual entitlement of £56,000.

There are more claims to be checked, so the additional boost to benefits could exceed the £300,000 so far. Martin Frost is New Charter's Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance. He said: "Making sure tenants get their entitlement to assistance is good for local business, and not just ours. Many tenants will spend this money locally on goods and services, so our successful campaign has more than just the obvious winners. Our

involvement here shows how crucial the housing sector is to a sustained economic recovery, something the recently launched House Proud campaign wants to put in front of every election candidate this year.”

Up to £10.5billion of income related benefits is estimated to go unclaimed in Britain each year. If you're a New Charter tenant who thinks you may be missing out, contact our dedicated Welfare Benefits Team on 0161 331 2200 for a free entitlement check-up.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. New Charter formed in 1999 as the new landlords to own and manage homes transferred from Tameside council in Greater Manchester. With a turnover of £70million a year and a workforce of 880, New Charter is one of the region's largest registered providers of social housing, and is regulated by the Tenant Services Authority, a Government watchdog. By incorporating Gedling Homes, the Group owns 18,600 homes. It was named in The Sunday Times 100 best companies to work for in 2009.
2. **HOUSE PROUD** is a campaign launched by 'Inside Housing' magazine and the Chartered Institute of Housing. Its aim is to shout about housing's crucial contribution to every aspect of social policy, and make housing a key election issue this year.
3. Results so far of the July campaign:

Benefit Type	Estimated weekly entitlement	Estimated Annual Entitlement
Housing Benefit	£2,554.90	£127,745.00
Council Tax Benefit	£ 311.39	£ 16,192.28
Supporting People Grant	£ 70.74	£ 3,537.00
Pension Credit (Guarantee)	£ 275.74	£ 14,338.48
Pension Credit (savings)	£ 124.98	£ 6,498.96
Working Tax Credit	£1,431.07	£ 74,415.64
Attendance Allowance	£ 47.10	£ 2,449.20
Carers Allowance	£ 29.50	£ 1,534.00
Total	£4,845.42	£246,710.56

4. Results so far of the November campaign:

Benefit Type	Estimated weekly entitlement	Estimated annual entitlement
Housing Benefit	£820.77	£41,038.50
Council Tax Benefit	£ 67.13	£ 3,490.76
Tax Credits	£227.15	£11,811.80
Total	£1,115.05	£56,341.06

5. **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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