

# PRESS RELEASE

17th December 2002

## NO CHIMNEYS FOR SANTA!



**Photo opportunity at 2.30 pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December at Enville Street, Audenshaw**

**Log fires roaring in the grate? These tenants don't need them!**

**Thirteen lucky tenants in Audenshaw, Greater Manchester are looking forward to feeling warm and snug in their brand-new homes this Christmas.**

The bungalows have been carefully designed with state-of-the-art energy efficient features and are very secure - there's not even a chimney for Santa to come down!

A number have been fully equipped for disabled households, and are the first to be built by New Charter Housing Trust Group, the new landlord who took over all council housing in Tameside less than 3 years ago.

The bungalows are something to celebrate, so New Charter invited Santa to present gifts to the new residents. These much-needed homes are also the first since the Council provided new homes - almost 20 years ago!

Proud tenants showed invited guests round their bungalows, which were built for New Charter by Richardson Projects of Oldham. "I'm overjoyed with the quality of my home, and the bungalow will make life so much easier for me", said one of the residents, Mrs Olwen Allcott.

The historic occasion was marked by the unveiling of a blue plaque by Julie Hardman, Chair of New Charter Housing (South). She said, "New Charter was set up to refurbish the many council homes transferred to us, which desperately needed investment. But we also recognise that we can build some new homes to provide the particular type of accommodation which is in short supply. Seeing the joy on our tenants' faces makes all our efforts worthwhile!"

New Charter has already started to build more new homes with a contract to construct 21 flats in the centre of Ashton-under-Lyne. These properties will replace flats due to be demolished to make way for the Greater Manchester Metrolink tram system. This will connect Manchester City Centre to Ashton-under-Lyne via the Commonwealth Games Stadium.

**ENDS**

## **Note to Editors**

New Charter formed in 1999 as the new landlords to own and manage nearly 16,400 properties transferred from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council in Greater Manchester. Until September 2000, it was Britain's biggest Large-Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT). With a turnover of £44 million a year and a workforce of 800, New Charter is the eleventh largest Registered Social Landlord (RSL), and is regulated by The Housing Corporation, a Government watchdog.

In October 1999, tenants voted two to one in favour of transfer, which took place on March 27<sup>th</sup> 2000.

New Charter inherited homes needing over £220 million of repairs and maintenance, and a 10-year improvement programme started immediately. New bathrooms, kitchens, windows, and central heating are being installed in many homes for rent. Already hundreds of tenants have benefited from this investment.

New Charter has a 5-year rent guarantee running until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005. Tenant involvement is critical to New Charter, and tenants have a greater say on all matters that affect their homes.

**Please contact us by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December if you want a copy of photographs taken**

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