



News Release from

Stockport Homes
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Stockport Homes is named runner up in national housing awards

Stockport Homes is celebrating after being named the runner up of two national awards by the National Federation of ALMOs (NFA), whose 69 member organisations oversee more than one million council owned properties across England. The winners and runners up of the 2010 NFA Awards were announced at a ceremony at the Midland Hotel, Manchester which was hosted by Janet Street-Porter.

Stockport Homes was named runner up in two categories; the Morrison Facilities Services Most Effective Partnership Project Award for the Play Partnerships Project that has seen new play areas around the Borough of Stockport open for children and young people, and the Kier Building Maintenance Most Outstanding Resident Award for Chrissie Ince's dedication to giving customers a voice across services.

The Morrison Facilities Services 2010 NFA Awards Most Effective Partnership category recognises effective projects brought about by well managed relationships across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Stockport Homes has been working with residents and Stockport's Play Partnership to deliver a range of exciting and adventurous new play areas across the neighbourhoods managed by Stockport Homes. The new spaces provide facilities for all age ranges; from the traditional swings and slides to aerial runways, activity trails, embankment tube slide, basket swings, 'overhead rotator' and climbing boulders. The project has been funded through a variety of sources including Play England, Big Lottery, Procure Plus (formerly GM Procure), Stockport Council and Stockport Homes. The project has not only seen physical improvement to sites, but has been complemented by a range of play and sport activities being delivered throughout the year.

The partners include residents, children and young people and key stakeholders of service and organisations working in our neighbourhoods. This includes regeneration, children and young people, leisure, play, youth services and external partners including Stockport Sports Trust and NPS Stockport.

The project has benefited the community by providing children and the community with 11 new play opportunities, an annual weekly programme of play activities, reduction in Anti-

Social Behaviour, providing residents with space to meet and socialise, increased health and well being and increased satisfaction with the spaces and neighbourhood.

The Kier Building Maintenance 2010 NFA Awards Most Outstanding Resident category celebrated the work of residents within their community, reducing crime, bringing about community cohesion and making a positive difference to their neighbours.

While Chrissie Ince may have come to Stockport at her most vulnerable, she has taken advantage of every opportunity provided by Stockport Homes to improve the quality of her life and to become a passionate advocate for other customers.

Chrissie took advantage of a number of learning and development activities offered by Stockport Homes, including two Skills for Life sessions. The confidence that she gained on these courses led to Chrissie to enrol on 22 weeks worth of Maths and English courses at a local adult education centre, scoring 99% and 90% respectively.

Chrissie has gone on to become very involved in driving Stockport Homes' services, first by attending monthly temporary accommodation Resident Meetings and then by becoming a founding member of the Temporary Accommodation Expert Panel. Chrissie has been instrumental in some of the service improvements that the panel have made.

Chrissie is also a member of the Quality Panel, a group of customer inspectors who audit Stockport Homes' services and in addition to her duties as an inspector, spends two days each month monitoring the reception in local area offices, ensuring they meet agreed service standards.

Chrissie's determination to improve the quality of her life and her commitment to using her experiences to help and inspire vulnerable customers has not gone unnoticed. In 2009 she was the recipient of the Stockport Homes Bernard Bradbury Memorial Award, an accolade given to the person considered by other customers and staff to have had the greatest positive impact in the past year. Chrissie was also short-listed and placed third for the TPAS Regional Award for Tenant of the Year.

The awards were judged by an independent panel; Alison Inman, Chair of the National Federation of ALMOs; Michael Gelling, Chairman of the National Tenant Voice; and Roger Jarman, Head of Housing at the Audit Commission.

Alison Inman said: "The NFA Awards always command a high standard of entry and this year has been no exception. The creativity, pro-activity and innovation shown by these individuals and teams and, above all, their steadfast commitment to housing and local communities should act as a benchmark for the entire ALMO movement."

Helen McHale, Chief Executive for Stockport Homes said: "We're very pleased to be runners up for these two prestigious awards; the play areas are already proving to be a real asset to residents, and with the school holidays upon us I'm sure they'll be even more popular."

It was also great to see Chrissie's dedication to help and improve services recognised as customer involvement is vital in Stockport Homes providing services our customers want and need."

Photo caption: Sleddale Close, Offerton – Opening event

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