

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS HONOURED AT THE FIRST NFA AWARDS

*Recognition for star performers in the world of council housing management*

**Date: 22 May 2007**

Innovation, success and best practice in council housing management were all firmly in the spotlight at the first annual NFA Awards, held in York last week.

Five years after the first arm's-length management organisations (ALMOs) were established by local councils to manage their housing stock, the NFA Awards were designed to recognise and reward individuals and organisations who have performed to the highest of standards at grass roots and beyond.

The NFA (National Federation of ALMOs) is an independent organisation established to represent the interests of ALMOs and promote the ALMO option.

More than 280 ALMO representatives and residents from across the country attended the awards at the Royal York Hotel, compered by BBC TV's *Working Lunch* presenter Nik Woods.

In a rousing speech, the Rt Hon Clive Betts MP, Chair of the 60 strong 'All Party Parliamentary Group for ALMOs', told delegates that the evening was not just about the winners of each award, but about respect and recognition for the hard work taking place at every level in every one of country's 65 ALMOs.

Community cohesion proved to be a key theme of the awards, which spanned seven individual categories. Helen Morris, of the Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation, was named Most Outstanding Resident for her determined efforts to promote community spirit, learning Spanish, organising lunches and day trips for the over-50s, and for organising a humorous community video

project called *Bingo Spit*. This featured older residents dressed as hoodies, and local youngsters impersonating their older neighbours.

A resident of St Leger Homes in South Yorkshire was instrumental in the creation of the most inspired tenant-led programme – a bicycle-recycling scheme, in which local residents are given refurbished bicycles free of charge.

Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing in West Yorkshire scooped the ‘Most Innovative Award’ for its discount card. The self-proclaimed “local card for local people” provides ALMO residents with discounts on the goods and services offered by local shops, promoting community businesses at the expense of high street chains.

NFA Chair Dennis Rees said: “The inaugural NFA awards were a tremendous success and clear testimony to the many ways in which ALMOs enable genuine tenant empowerment. We would like to extend our thanks once again to all of the sponsors, whose support made this event possible, and to the judging panel who took on the tough task of choosing winners for each the seven hotly contested categories.”

The awards were judged by a panel of independent judges comprising Roy Irwin, Chief Inspector of Housing for the Audit Commission Housing Inspectorate, Janet Dean, Strategic Housing Adviser for the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and Michael Gelling, Chair of TAROE (Tenants and Residents Organisations of England).

Mr Irwin commented: “I was very impressed by the standard of all the entries. Reading them conveyed a vivid impression of the commitment and dedication of so many within the ALMO world to their communities – and not just staff but residents too.”

The National Federation of ALMOs promotes the ALMO option in council house management. ALMOs provide housing management and housing services to almost one million council properties across 65 ALMOs nationwide.

**Ends**

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*The NFA Awards were organised by Acceleris Marketing Communications. For further information please contact Paul Amourdedieu on 0845 4567251*

## **Notes to editors**

### **Most Outstanding Resident** (Kindly Sponsored by Kier Support Services)

Winner:

Helen Morris – Kensington & Chelsea

Highly Commended:

Eve Privett – Ascham Homes

Daniel Illisevic – Northwards Housing

### **Most Inspired Resident-Led Programme** (Kindly Sponsored by Mazars LLP)

Winner:

St Leger Homes – Bicycle Recycling Programme

Highly Commended:

Dale & Valley Homes –Wear Valley Customer Panel

Homes For Islington – Brecknock Playground project

### **Best Resident Communication** (Kindly Sponsored by Keepmoat PLC)

Winner:

City West Homes – City West News

Highly Commended:

Carrick Housing – Malabar Video Project

Derby Homes – Youth Website

### **Most Innovative Project** (Kindly Sponsored by Connaught Partnerships)

Winner:

Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing – KNH Excel Discount Card

Highly Commended:

Newham Homes – NeAT project

Sheffield Homes – City Stewardship Programme

### **Best Community Initiative** (Kindly Sponsored by Mears Group)

Winner:

Homes for Islington – Sport Activities for Everyone programme

Highly Commended:

Barnet Homes – The Barnet Homes Gardening Club for residents

Cheltenham Borough Homes – CBH Junior Wardens and Youth Forum

### **Most Effective Partnership Project** (Kindly Sponsored by Trowers & Hamlins)

Winner:

Carrick Housing – Ground Source Heat Pump initiative

Highly Commended:

Blackpool Coastal Housing – Customer Focused Partnering

Nottingham City Homes – ASB Events

### **Board Member of the Year** (Kindly Sponsored by Wates Living Space)

Winners:

Karin Jaeger – Brent Housing Partnership

David Procter – Hounslow Homes

Highly Commended:

Trevor Renouf – Barnet Homes

Janet Storar – Nottingham City Homes