

# PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

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## Academy opens doors



### Images of students in uniform available

The New Charter Academy in Ashton-under-Lyne opens its doors to students on Thursday this week (September 4<sup>th</sup>).

Tameside's newest and largest school initially offers up to 1350 student places for 11-16 year olds, but will add a 300 entry sixth form in 2010.

The Academy is the first in Britain sponsored by a housing association. Sponsor New Charter Housing Trust has done much more than lend the Academy its name. It believes the Academy will transform local education opportunities.

The chance to create the New Charter Academy came from the closure of two secondary schools, Hartshead Sports College and Stamford Community High School. New Charter announced its plan to sponsor an Academy in November 2005. Fourteen months later, in a change of plans and timing, New Charter agreed with the government to open a year early - but on both the existing school sites. Work on a new campus at Broadoak in Ashton-under-Lyne has now started and the Academy will move in September 2010.

New Charter secured extra government funding to refurbish some of the existing buildings. Both locations have been the scene of intensive activity over the summer holidays.

Under the Academy, the Stamford site has been renamed the Silver Springs campus, and on Thursday will initially welcome all the Year 7 intake (first year). On the same day, Year 10 students will be the first to enrol at the Academy's Greenhurst campus (formerly Hartshead School). All other year groups enrol the following day (Friday September 5<sup>th</sup>).



**iN business for neighbourhoods**

New Charter's Group Chief Executive Ian Munro said: "We are a Housing Association totally committed to our customers' needs. And our customers are a much bigger group than our current tenants.

"It is clear to me that our massive investment in homes and environment will not, on its own, provide great opportunities for all our communities. The success of our work with young people to get them involved in things that are beneficial for them and their communities shows there is untapped talent in this area. We need to give young people the chance to achieve more than they thought possible. The Academy can provide this."

George Lloyd, Executive Director of the New Charter Academy said: "These are exciting times for education locally. The Academy will be part of the New Charter 'family'. I'm grateful for the involvement so far, and want to harness the sponsor's contribution to improving learning. Recent examination and performance figures show how much we will have to do to transform learning. But this is a marvellous opportunity and my team of teaching and support staff plan to excel."

## **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 almost 800, New Charter is one of the region's largest Registered Social Landlords, and is regulated by The Housing Corporation, a Government watchdog. By incorporating Aksa Housing Association, the Group owns 15,000 homes.
2. New Charter announced its sponsorship of the 1650-place Academy in November 2005. This includes a sixth form for 300 students. The landlord is putting £2million into the new school which has been the catalyst for a £300m Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme across Tameside in Greater Manchester.
3. Planning consent for the new Broadoak campus was granted by Tameside MBC on 18th June 2008. A £38m campus will house both the New Charter Academy and a special school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Initial site preparation works has started, which includes dismantling two huge electricity pylons.
4. **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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