



# PRESS RELEASE

**Immediate release**

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## **Homelessness slashed in Tameside**

### **Pictures available**

A new name for a key housing service in Tameside Greater Manchester has beaten the national trend on homelessness.

The newly-rebranded Tameside Housing Advice on Old Street in Ashton-under-Lyne saw the number of people accepted as homeless fall 70% from last year. Just 42 cases were accepted, a reduction from the 142 cases recorded in 2008.

Locally, a target to halve the number of people living in temporary accommodation was reached two months early.

National figures released at the end of last week show the number of people accepted as homeless by English local authorities is down 26 per cent from the same time last year. The statistics show that the number of households accepted as homeless in England between January and March has fallen to 11,350, down from 15,430 at the same time last year. The comparative data for Tameside Housing Advice is 10 households, down from 27 at the same time last year – a reduction of 63%.

National figures also show the largest year on year decrease in the number of households in temporary accommodation, with numbers reduced by 17 per cent since last year.

The fall in homelessness is despite increased demands on the service during the recession. Emphasis on preventing households becoming homeless has always been a key part of the local approach which explains the reduction in acceptances.

Tameside Housing Advice is a service run by New Charter, which was successful in retaining the contract to provide homelessness housing aid and advice services on behalf of Tameside council. Manager Howard Lomas said: "We have always emphasised our work to prevent homelessness, which means far less families have the stress of being homeless. It's also cheaper in the long run to help people keep their existing home where possible, and a more rewarding job for our staff and the agencies we work alongside."

One local initiative introduced by Tameside Housing Advice has proved particularly effective for women fleeing domestic violence. Working with the local women's refuge has reduced the average time women and their children spend there to 32 days.

Homelessness was made a high priority by the government, which recognises the hard work put in by agencies such as Tameside Housing Advice. A full range of advice for all residents of the borough is provided from 119-121 Old Street, Ashton-under-Lyne tel: 0161 331 2700.

## 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 £59million a year and a workforce of 840, New Charter is one of the region's largest Registered Social Landlords, 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 best 100 companies to work for in 2009.
2. New Charter provides homelessness, housing aid and advice services to Tameside council under contract. It has successfully won tenders since 2000. Tameside Housing Advice is at 119-121 Old Street, Ashton-under-Lyne tel: 0161 331 2700.
3. The latest homelessness statistics can be found at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/homelessnessq12009>
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.

## CONTACT:



**business for neighbourhoods**

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