

# PRESS RELEASE

Immediate release

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## Go-ahead for Academy

### Pictures available

A huge investment of £40million is heading for Ashton-under-Lyne as government ministers gave the final go-ahead to build a new education campus.

A new home for the New Charter Academy is to be built by the Inspired Spaces consortium on land at Broadoak to the north of the town. It will be constructed alongside a replacement for the Samuel Laycock special school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

The New Charter Academy opened in September 2008 on two former secondary school sites. It was the first in England to be sponsored by a housing association. News of the go-ahead arrived as staff and students were on their summer break.

Group Chief Executive of sponsor New Charter, Ian Munro is also chair of governors at the Academy. "We've overcome several unexpected obstacles to finally present government with proposals", he said. "This is the first Academy to be built as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme without using the private finance initiative, so there's been some new ground for us all to tread.

"Exciting though this news is, the Academy is not about new buildings but transforming the life chances of our young people. But these fantastic facilities will help. I'm delighted the builders are starting work this week. We will welcome students here in September 2011."

The inspirational design will complement the efforts to establish the Academy as one of the leading education providers. The purpose-built facilities will incorporate state-of-the-art sports, performing arts, science and technology facilities designed around the Academy's needs. Every space will access the latest IT and every student will be able to use it.



Although the Academy is the largest school in Tameside, the new campus is designed to feel like a small school environment. The specialist areas – business and enterprise, sports, creative arts, science, design and technology - and learning resources will be first class and available for use by the community and other schools.

## 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 announced its sponsorship of the 1650-place Academy in November 2005. This includes a sixth form for 300 students which opens in September 2010. The landlord has put £2million into the new school which was the catalyst for a £340m Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme across all secondary schools in Tameside in Greater Manchester.
3. The approval process firstly seeks support of the Local Education Partnership, a public private partnership comprising Tameside council, Inspired Spaces and Partnership for Schools (the body responsible to government for delivering the Building Schools for the Future programme across the country). With this won, the proposals are then considered by Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.
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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