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**April 2009**

## **1,000 JOBS BOOST THROUGH UNION SQUARE'S JOBS FOR U**

Hammerson launched its Union Square employment and training programme today (28<sup>th</sup> April). Along with eight public sector, voluntary and community bodies Hammerson signed the Union Square Employment and Training Charter for 'Jobs for U'.

The 'Jobs for U' Charter pledges to help , train and employ people within Aberdeen City and Shire for the 1,000 new jobs the scheme is creating in the leisure, retail and food sectors.

The initiative will operate in partnership with the newly formed 'Aberdeen Works' which brings together, among other organisations, charter signatories Aberdeen City Council, Jobcentre Plus and Skills Development Scotland. Other signatories of the Charter include main contractor Miller Construction, NHS Grampian, Social Resources Trust and Skillsmart Retail.

Jobs for U will assist both job seekers and tenants located in Union Square with a "one-stop shop" for recruitment and training. The initiative is primarily targeted at those who are currently out of work. The support offered to get people back into employment will include a dedicated employment website, a specialist recruitment manager and tailored training programmes.

Michelle Dawson, Community Manager of Hammerson said: "Union Square will be a new and exciting place to work offering varied and flexible job opportunities and the chance for career progression. We are committed to helping people get back into work and supporting both candidates and employers throughout the employment process.

"We have significant experience of working in partnership with public sector, community and voluntary organisations to deliver employment schemes. We are

thrilled to be working with Aberdeen Works to launch this scheme which will make such a difference to the people of Aberdeen City and Shire.”

Aberdeen City Council Leader Kate Dean said: "I am absolutely delighted to sign up to this charter along with Councillor John Stewart.

"This unique project will make a real difference to the lives of Aberdeen folk which at the same time will provide a skilled workforce for the companies that will providing services in this impressive development.

"It is so encouraging to see this level of commitment during these times of economic uncertainty.

"I look forward to working closely with our partners and Aberdeen reaping the benefits."

Jobcentre Plus Customer Service Operations Manager, Sheena Ogg, added: “We are really looking forward to working with Hammerson and partner organisations to support our customers into the wide range of training and job opportunities that Union Square will bring to the city.

“We will also offer help to employers with their recruitment processes to make sure they get the right people for their jobs.

“It is particularly important in the current economic climate that we continue to support all of our customers, but especially those who need that additional bit of help, to get them into work. Hammerson recognise and understand this and, through our joint approach, we would fully expect to see a significant number of our customers moving into employment in the Union Square development.”

Hammerson has almost ten years of experience in delivering successful employment training schemes. In 2008, over 6,000 retail and leisure related jobs were created at Highcross in Leicester and Cabot Circus in Bristol. As with Jobs for U, the programmes were created in partnership with local employment providers and key employers.

The Jobs for U website will launch at the end of May. Those looking for additional information in the meantime can access this on the Union Square website

<http://www.unionsquareaberdeen.com/jobs>

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes to Editors:**

### **Hammerson Job Creation Stats**

- Over 6,000 retail and leisure related jobs at Highcross, Leicester and Cabot Circus in Bristol in 2008
- Hammerson invested over £320,000 in the two employment programmes and leveraged an additional £2 million of government and European funding
- Both schemes provided the local community with access to a range of employment opportunities and specifically targeted those that were out of work - over 72% of people offered jobs at Highcross were previously unemployed or aged 16-19 and not in education, employment or training
- Hammerson's links with Skillsmart Retail and Sector Skills for Council, led to the piloting of a dedicated pre-employment retail training programme in partnership with local colleges in Leicester and Bristol- over 1,000 unemployed people took part in the two week programmes
- Over 130 retailers were supported by the programmes
- As with Jobs for U, this service was free to retailers and saved significant capital expenditure surrounding employment for new stores openings
- In both cities, a positive shift in the perception of retail as a career was noted
- Like Jobs for U, the programmes were created in partnership with local employment providers and key retailers

### **Union Square**

Union Square is a £250 million mixed use, regeneration scheme creating a new retail and leisure quarter for Aberdeen. Developed by Hammerson, the scheme includes 56 retail units, comprising a range of national and international brands, up to 12 restaurants and cafés, a 203 bed hotel and 10 screen multiplex, set to be Aberdeen's largest cinema. The scheme will also provide visitors with a new civic square. Union Square will be Aberdeen's most accessible retail and leisure offer with 1,700 car parking spaces, easily reached from all major routes and integrated with the city's bus and rail stations - providing a gateway to the region and encouraging sustainable travel to the city.

[www.unionsquareaberdeen.com](http://www.unionsquareaberdeen.com)

### **Hammerson plc**

Hammerson plc is a FTSE-100 Real Estate Investment Trust which operates principally in the retail sector in the UK and France. Its £6.5 billion portfolio, which provides 1.4 million m<sup>2</sup> of retail space and 255,000 m<sup>2</sup> of offices, includes 15 major shopping centres and 19 retail parks.

Hammerson has a track record of successfully delivering major city centre regeneration projects. Award-winning developments include Bishops Square in London and Bullring in Birmingham. In September 2008 the Company opened three major retail-led developments: Highcross, Leicester; Cabot Circus, Bristol and an extension to Parinor, an existing centre in

Paris. This autumn, Hammerson will open its latest retail-led regeneration scheme, Union Square in Aberdeen.

The Company is currently working with several councils across the UK to deliver retail-led mixed-use projects in cities including Leeds, Southampton and Sheffield.

[www.hammerson.com](http://www.hammerson.com).