



## press release

### SHARE PLC

("Share" or "the Company")

#### Free Shares Offer

Share plc to offer 4,000,000 free shares

Share plc, parent company of retail stockbroker The Share Centre, is delighted to announce an offer of 4,000,000 free shares in the Company ahead of its proposed flotation on AIM.

#### Offer highlights

- 4,000,000 shares will be available on a first come first served basis
- 200 free shares will be given to each investor who takes out a full subscription ISA with The Share Centre by 3 April 2009, including customers who have already fully subscribed in the current tax year
- Investors who transfer their existing ISA or PEP of at least equivalent value to a full subscription to The Share Centre also qualify for the free shares offer. Shares will be issued per ISA or PEP transferred in rather than per investor and valued at the completion date of the transfer
- The offer allows personal investors to get involved in the exciting prospects of the Company as it approaches its proposed flotation on AIM
- Share plc shareholders receive a rebate of up to £300 per quarter against dealing commission on trades dealt through The Share Centre

It is intended additional shares may be purchased by personal investors at the time of the Company's proposed admission onto AIM.

Details of Share plc's plans are set out in the attached article, which is being published in The Share Centre's investment magazine, The Shareholder, today.

Full details of the free shares offer can be found at [www.share.com/freeshares](http://www.share.com/freeshares) from 18th January 2008.

Gavin Oldham, Chief Executive of Share plc, said:

"Personal investors have played a key role in the growth and development of Share plc to date and at this exciting stage for the Company, we feel it is right to include them in our plans for the future.

By offering free shares we hope to give our customers the chance to share in our success as we move towards the next step in the Company's evolution, a quotation on AIM."

Gavin Oldham will be presenting these plans in more detail in an online seminar on Wednesday 23 January at 6pm, accessible via [www.share.com/webcast](http://www.share.com/webcast) and other channels. There will be a live question and answer session immediately following the presentation and the recorded event will then be available as a webcast/podcast download during the following weeks, also from [www.share.com/webcast](http://www.share.com/webcast).

**-Ends-**

Oxford House Oxford Road Aylesbury Buckinghamshire HP21 8SZ  
Phone 01296 41 41 41 Visit [www.share.com](http://www.share.com)

Registered in England number 2966283

**For further information please contact:**

**Share plc**

Gavin Oldham, Chief Executive 01296 439 100

Richard Stone, Finance Director 01296 439 270

**Notes for Editors:**

The Share Centre was established in 1990 to provide value-for-money share services for private investors. Its range of services includes buying and selling shares (by internet, telephone and post) and a comprehensive share administration and safe custody service. Tax-efficient investment 'wrappers' including ISAs, PEPs, CTFs and SIPPs are also available.

The Share Centre's Advice Team provides comment on market sectors and individual shares, including all of the post-privatisation /demutualization companies, on [www.share.com](http://www.share.com). Access is available to customers and registered users of the site. Registration is free. In addition, account customers can receive individual telephone advice on UK-listed shares and on funds traded via the CoFunds trading platform.

The Share Centre is a member of the London Stock Exchange and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority under reference 146768. This press release has been approved by The Share Centre for the purposes of section 21 Financial Services and Markets Act 2000.

Registered in England No. 2461949. Registered office: Oxford House, Oxford Road, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP21 8SZ.

**Risk Warning:**

If you are in any doubt about whether these investments are suitable or appropriate for you, you should seek your own personal financial advice from your stockbroker, bank manager, solicitor, accountant or other independent adviser authorised under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 or contact The Share Centre's Advice Team. Please note that whilst we fully intend to complete Share plc's admission to trading on AIM there can be no guarantee that such admission will be completed within the currently anticipated timescale or at all. Until such time as Share plc is admitted to trading on AIM or another investment exchange you will only be able to trade the free shares on Sharemark. Do remember that the value of stock market investments and their income can fall as well as rise, and you may get back less than originally invested.

**Attachment – Article from The Shareholder magazine**

At The Share Centre we've often done things rather differently, and the proposed admission of the ordinary shares of our parent company, Share plc, to trading on the AIM market of the London Stock Exchange (AIM) will be no exception. The Group's vision is "more people enjoying straightforward investing", and we see no reason why we should depart from those populist principles in bringing Share plc to AIM. Indeed, those populist principles may be part of the reason why The Share Centre was voted AIM Best Broker by readers of Shares magazine in November 2007.

So, as in 2001, and in preparation for the proposed admission to AIM, we're launching a new offer of free shares in Share plc for those who make a full subscription to ISAs with us. We've also awarded free shares in the business to all our eligible staff within our employee Share Incentive Plan. When we bring Share plc to market, we anticipate there'll also be a share issue for personal investors who wish to subscribe. When dealing starts on AIM, we'll continue to dual-trade on Sharemark, our own market, to help keep dealing spreads to a minimum.

What we can tell you about now is the opportunity to get free shares when you subscribe to, or transfer to The Share Centre a full value ISA (or PEP) and the intended calendar for AIM introduction, which should be complete, all other things being equal, by the end of May.

Oxford House Oxford Road Aylesbury Buckinghamshire HP21 8SZ  
Phone 01296 41 41 41 Visit [www.share.com](http://www.share.com)

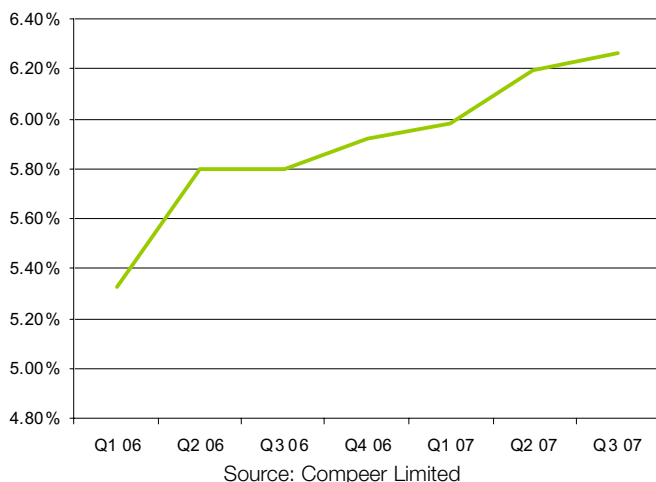
Registered in England number 2966283

But first, why all the commotion? Well, we have made a lot of progress over the past few years, and we think it's time to move to the next stage of our development. Those who've been using our services for some time, have probably already noticed quite a few of those changes. We've adopted a much clearer, more straightforward style and we've refurbished our website, incorporating many new sources of information and investment tools (including a fund supermarket). In addition, considerable effort has been put into providing easy and low-cost access to a wide range of funds, some of which you'll find featured in this edition. We've also been leaders in the successful lobby pressing for changes to the Companies Act 2006 for the benefit of nominee-based shareholders.

We've made some big changes within the Group over the years. We moved our headquarters to Aylesbury in 2001, we've modernised our computer systems and we continue to take advantage of new technology (including the streamlining of customer access to the market for both shares and funds). As part of these improvements, we've introduced on-line account opening for both Share Accounts and ISAs, which has substantially boosted the rate of account opening over the past year. We're also now accredited as an "Investor in People" business, and we benefit substantially from the involvement of all our team members.

With these solid foundations underpinning the business we've also been promoting our services actively for the past two years, a campaign which is costing in the order of £2m per annum. That's given us a "share of voice" in the retail stockbroking market of about 20%, on a level with the major clearing banks. You may have seen our advertising on the web, in newspapers – even on London taxis – and it's beginning to achieve results. Our market share has been rising steadily, as shown in the following chart: this includes our competitors' activity in spread-betting and CFDs, which we don't handle. In fact, we aim to maintain a relatively low risk profile as a business in many areas, which we believe is fitting for a company which is in business to serve personal investors as their agent.

#### **Our market share of retail stockbroking revenues based on selected peer group analysis**



We want to grow the Group's revenues and therefore the opportunity to build earnings by attracting more business as we go forward. Share plc's proposed admission to AIM is intended to give us a number of opportunities to help achieve that objective. We believe it will raise The Share Centre's profile, enabling us to compete better for private investor business and to attract the interest of affinity partners who wish to introduce share services to their customers. It should also give us more opportunities to consider potential acquisitions to build the business. As the business grows, it will also provide more scope for broadening our capital structure, so that in due course we can consider entry to the main market of the London Stock Exchange.

As in 2001, we'd like to start that process by recognising those who are helping us to build the business over the months ahead. In view of the significant changes which the Government is introducing for ISAs and PEPs, and the new Funds ISA we're introducing free of our usual annual administration fees, it has been decided to focus that recognition on those who subscribe to or transfer to us full value ISAs or PEPs. And to help investors who are unsure of what to invest in, we're introducing a new Fund of Funds, with a choice of three investment styles: Cautious, Positive and Adventurous. So free shares in Share plc will be offered to all direct customers of The Share Centre who subscribe in full (before 6pm on 4 April 2008: £7,000 to a 2007/8 Maxi ISA; OR after 6 April 2008 (but before 6 pm on 3 April 2009): £7,200 to an ISA) or who transfer in an ISA or PEP of at least those values at the point of transfer between now and 3 April 2009. Please note that the total number of shares is limited, and will be allocated on a "first come, first served" basis.

There'll be 200 free shares allocated in two tranches: for example, those who subscribe or transfer before 6pm on 4 April 2008 will receive half their free shares in May 2008, and the second half in May 2009 (provided the ISA is not closed or partly withdrawn by the applicable allocation date). For details of these and later free share allocation dates refer to our 'Free Shares Offer' webpage: [www.share.com/freeshares](http://www.share.com/freeshares). All free shares will be credited to a Share Account, which will be opened for you if you do not already have one, as AIM shares cannot currently be held in an ISA. But don't worry, no annual administration charges will be applied to the Share Account whilst you only hold Share plc shares in it. The shares will rank in full for dividends and will entitle the shareholder to our Dealing Commission Credit scheme, a shareholder perk for investors in Share plc.

Further details on the terms and conditions of the free shares offer are available on The Share Centre's website at [www.share.com/freeshares](http://www.share.com/freeshares) / available by post or email by calling our Customer Services Team on 01296 41 41 41.

There'll be 4,000,000 shares in Share plc set aside for this free share programme: that's enough for 20,000 ISA or PEP eligible transfers, and if all the shares are allocated they would represent approximately 2.4% of the shares in issue at that stage, based on our current capital structure; therefore building considerably on the 6% increase in share ownership arising from our 2000 and 2001 free share programmes. What better evidence of our passion for broader share ownership?

The free shares offer will be promoted throughout the proposed AIM admission process (for as long as they're still available!), but during April we intend there to be an opportunity to buy additional shares in Share plc. Again, this offer will be aimed at private investors. We expect our preliminary results announcement to be made on 26 February 2008. The AIM admission document will contain full details of the Group, together with our audited accounts to 31 December 2007.

Following the proposed AIM admission, we expect to provide regular quarterly trading updates. These should include our quarterly market share results calculated by Compeer, the independent analyst of stockbroking companies, and our commentary on market conditions - which could be quite interesting over the year ahead.

So we look forward to welcoming you as a shareholder in Share plc, and hope that you'll find the accompanying ISA and Fund of Funds investment opportunities rewarding. Admission to AIM is a major undertaking, but we consider it will offer good prospects for the future of our (and hopefully your) company.

Oxford House Oxford Road Aylesbury Buckinghamshire HP21 8SZ  
Phone 01296 41 41 41 Visit [www.share.com](http://www.share.com)

Registered in England number 2966283