

# your future your choice

The proposal to transfer your home to  
Parkway Green Housing Trust

October 2005

[www.parkwaygreen.co.uk](http://www.parkwaygreen.co.uk)



# your future your choice

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# 1 your future your choice

## What's in this part of the booklet?

- Manchester City Council's housing transfer proposal
- Why the City Council is proposing this change
- How the City Council reached the decision to consult you on this idea
- Why the City Council cannot spend what is needed
- Why Parkway Green Housing Trust was chosen
- How Parkway Green Housing Trust is in a better financial position
- How the promises made in this booklet would be kept
- Tenants' role in the process
- How to get more information
- How to get independent advice

## What is the proposal?

Manchester City Council is proposing to transfer the ownership of its homes in West Wythenshawe to Parkway Green Housing Trust.

The full name of the proposed new landlord is Parkway Green Housing Trust Ltd. Throughout the rest of this document the Trust is referred to in a shortened version of its full name as Parkway Green.

Parkway Green would become your new landlord if the housing transfer goes ahead. The proposals in this booklet have been drawn up after consultation with local people about the changes you want to see for the area.

These proposals are the first part of a consultation process – they may change as a result of your comments.

The transfer can only go ahead if the majority of tenants in West Wythenshawe want it. You would be able to vote for or against the

transfer in a confidential postal ballot to be held in November 2005. Electoral Reform Services, an organisation that is independent of the City Council and Parkway Green, would carry out the ballot.

## Why is the City Council proposing this change?

There are good reasons why a transfer would improve things for you and everyone else who lives in this area. Here are the main points – there are more details later in this booklet.

### Major improvements planned

Like all Councils, Manchester has to keep to the government's tight rules about how it can raise and spend money. This means that we have a limited amount to spend on our council homes. We cannot raise the cash we need to improve homes in West Wythenshawe to high enough standards.

But Parkway Green is free of the financial restrictions placed on the City Council. Parkway Green's business plan would enable it to raise money for comprehensive improvements to the homes and the environment in West Wythenshawe. Details are in Part 3 of this booklet.

### Rents protected – no big increases

Parkway Green plans to keep rents affordable and would give you a rent promise. They must have rents that are in line with the government's rent reforms in the same way as local authorities. Details are in Part 4 of this booklet.

### Local services and service improvements

Parkway Green would have an office in the area bringing you a local service. Also, Parkway Green would introduce new ways of managing the neighbourhood and looking after your home to give you a high quality, quick and efficient housing service. Details are in Part 5 of this booklet.

### Local people making decisions

Tenants and residents would have more say in how homes and the area are run and where the

money is spent. Performance would be measured and the results monitored and published. Details are in Part 6 of this booklet.

### **Your rights protected**

A special legally binding tenancy agreement (an assured tenancy with protected rights) would mean you keep all the main rights you have now as a City Council secure tenant. You would also get some new rights if the transfer went ahead. Details are in Part 7 of this booklet.

### **Your benefits protected**

You would also keep your right to claim housing benefit, and all other benefits. Housing benefits would still be processed and paid by the City Council. If you live on the Larch Close estate (Planetree Walk, Rosewood Walk, Maple Road West and Larch Close) Trafford Council would process and pay your housing benefit application.

## **How did the City Council reach this decision?**

The City Council, working with local people, has examined a number of options for West Wythenshawe, these are:

- keeping ownership of council homes;
- transferring council homes to a specially created housing company;
- setting up an "arms length management organisation" (Almo);
- a housing Private Finance Initiative (PFI).

After a long and detailed examination of all these options and after consulting tenants and residents, the City Council believes that things cannot stay as they are, and that the best option for tenants, the City Council, and the housing service is a proposal to transfer ownership and management of the City Council's homes in West Wythenshawe to a brand new local housing company; a not-for-profit registered social landlord (RSL) – Parkway Green Housing Trust.

## **Why can't the City Council spend what it needs?**

There are limits on what the City Council can spend on the housing service; Councils can only borrow so much to fund housing projects. This is because our borrowing affects the overall level of public sector borrowing (the PSBR) and therefore the overall economy. The government controls this strictly.

A large number of homes in the city urgently need work now. A survey of what investment is needed for the whole of the City Council's housing shows that we need about £1.1 billion to bring our homes and neighbourhoods up to the high standard you deserve over the next 10 years.

But only £480 million would be available through the usual arrangements, giving a shortfall of £620 million. That is why the City Council needs to examine all the options available to bring in additional investment over and above what is available through the traditional means.

As well as all this, the government has changed the rules on how Councils work out council rents that will mean even less money for repairs and improvements in coming years. There are more details below.

## **Why Parkway Green?**

A special 'steering group' – made up of volunteers from your local tenant and resident associations, your local Councillors – and Manchester City Council chose the Parkway Green option because Parkway Green would commit to:

- bringing every tenant's home up to a modern standard;
- offering a rent promise and a long-term policy of keeping rents affordable;
- having a base in the area to manage the homes effectively and efficiently;
- continued investment in the community to make your area a better place to live;

- involving local people in making decisions about the area;
- maintaining the vast majority of tenants' existing rights and introducing some new ones.

Parkway Green would be a new local housing company and a 'Registered Social Landlord', set up specifically to manage City Council homes in West Wythenshawe if the proposed transfer goes ahead. Registered Social Landlords set up as companies limited by guarantee are non-profit making organisations. This means that any surplus money they receive from managing their homes must be spent on furthering their objectives, which include providing repairs, services and improvements for their tenants. Parkway Green would have its own board of management, including local people, involving tenants and councillors. This new housing company would give local independence for a local organisation to run its own affairs.

As well as the commitments above, Parkway Green would also commit to:

- putting West Wythenshawe first every time;
- supporting wider regeneration such as local job schemes, training courses and making homes and streets safer;
- pursuing its objective of making West Wythenshawe a place residents can be proud of, and where people want to live, work and play.

## How is Parkway Green in a better financial position?

Parkway Green would have more freedom to borrow money for the work that needs doing and could pay the money back over a long period.

As a result Parkway Green is better able to make long-term plans for rents and the cost of repairs, improvements and redevelopment than the City Council, which must review its spending every year to take account of changes in government policy and how much it has from rents and from the government.

## Regenerating the community

Parkway Green is committed to the regeneration of the area and creating sustainable neighbourhoods over the long term. The proposed transfer is one part of a comprehensive regeneration framework for the whole of the Wythenshawe area.

The Wythenshawe Strategic Regeneration Framework is being developed through a series of neighbourhood plans, overseen by the Wythenshawe Regeneration Team. At the heart of the Strategic Regeneration Framework is the aim to make West Wythenshawe a place where people want to live by providing good quality housing which meets the needs and aspirations of present and future residents whether they rent their homes or buy them.

Parkway Green would play a key role in helping to achieve this by providing high quality housing services, supporting wider regeneration and improved neighbourhood management.

Parkway Green will work in partnership with a range of people to ensure that benefits are seen across the area. These include Manchester City Council, Wythenshawe Partnership, Manchester College of Art and Technology, the Police and the Crime and Disorder Partnership, Metrolink, the NHS, and many more. At the heart of this is the aim to make your area a place where people want to live, work and invest. More details on this are in Part 8 of this booklet.

## How would promises be kept?

The plans to improve your homes and local neighbourhoods are very exciting, so you need to be sure they would be delivered if the transfer goes ahead. A legally binding agreement between Parkway Green and the City Council setting out all the plans must be approved by a government minister – the Secretary of State within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Housing Corporation – the government's regulator for registered social landlords will check Parkway Green against its regulatory

code and guidance – and Manchester City Council would check to see that Parkway Green keeps to everything it says it would do in this booklet. The government's Housing Inspectorate from the Audit Commission would also inspect Parkway Green. There is more information about the Housing Corporation and the Audit Commission in Part 2 of this booklet.

## A chance to have your say

The transfer needs the backing of the people who live in the area. Parkway Green and the City Council have consulted widely with tenants, residents and other interested people to put together these proposals. Before making a final decision, you can tell us what you think about the transfer, or ask any questions. Please send back the 'What's Your View' sheet that came with this booklet by 12 noon on Wednesday 2nd November 2005. We will look at every comment and, if necessary, alter the proposals in the light of what you say. We will send you more information before you are asked to vote formally on the proposals in the ballot starting in November 2005.

The City Council will consider all comments and explain any changes made because of this consultation. You will then have 28 days to inform the government minister responsible for transfers like this (The Office of Deputy Prime Minister) of any objections you may still have.

### How would the vote be counted?

The transfer would only go ahead if a clear majority of eligible tenants vote YES in a confidential postal ballot. All Council tenants (introductory and secure) directly affected can vote. Joint tenants have a vote each. The ballot paper would be delivered to your home with a pre-paid envelope for you to send back your vote. You will also be able to vote over the telephone and online. Electoral Reform Services would run the ballot. They are independent of the City Council and Parkway Green.

If you are in favour of the transfer it's important that you do vote YES in the ballot. If you don't vote, it will have the same effect as voting NO.

### If the vote is YES

If the majority of eligible tenants vote YES, the proposal would go to the government minister for final approval. On receipt of approval the transfer could go ahead in June 2006. All City Council tenants in West Wythenshawe included in the transfer proposals would become tenants of Parkway Green, even those who voted NO or didn't vote.

You would no longer be a tenant of the City Council. The law says that the transfer process should follow a certain timetable. Details of the legal requirements and the current timetable are set out in Part 10 of this booklet.

### If the vote is NO

If a majority of tenants who are eligible to vote, either vote NO or don't vote at all, the transfer to Parkway Green would not happen and you would stay as a City Council tenant. If the transfer doesn't happen, the improvements to your home described in this booklet would not go ahead as proposed. The City Council would continue to comply with its legal repairing obligations as a landlord, but under its current resources it cannot afford to carry out the proposed major improvements outlined in this document.

## Where can we go for more information?

There are a number of ways to get more information:

- Call the City Council on 0161 234 4356;
- Call your Independent Tenants' Advisor, Jackie Grannell from Indigo 0800 146 702 (freephone number);
- Contact your local councillor. To get their number see part 9 of this booklet.
- Visit your nearest Citizens Advice Bureau.

There is also a range of other material that you might want to look at. Details are in Part 11 of this booklet.

## What is Indigo Training & Consultancy?

Indigo is an organisation that specialises in working with and for tenants. Indigo was chosen by tenants and residents to provide you with free and impartial advice on the proposal for the transfer of the City Council's housing in West Wythenshawe. They have experience of advising and working with tenants and residents of other transfers across the northwest. If you are concerned about any aspect of the proposal and want an independent opinion, you should contact Jackie Grannell:

### **write to her at:**

Indigo Training & Consultancy Ltd  
45 Cable House  
Cheapside  
Liverpool  
L2 2SX

### **or telephone:**

Freephone number 0800 146 702. If you call Indigo out of hours please leave a message on the answerphone and they will return your call the next working day.

### **or by e-mail**

[westwythenshawe@indigo-ltd.co.uk](mailto:westwythenshawe@indigo-ltd.co.uk)



## 2 About Parkway Green Housing Trust

## What is in this part of the booklet?

- How Parkway Green is organised and how it may change if the proposed transfer goes ahead
- How the board was chosen and how future board members would be selected
- Who would provide the service?
- Who regulates and monitors Parkway Green?
- Where Parkway Green would get its money
- How the future financial security of Parkway Green would be safeguarded

## What type of organisation is Parkway Green?

Parkway Green would be set up as a local housing company. It would be registered as a company limited by guarantee and would also be a registered charity. Parkway Green must also be registered with the government's housing regulator the Housing Corporation before the transfer can take place.

This means that it would be:

- run by a voluntary, unpaid board of management which includes tenants, independent people and Manchester City Council nominees;
- run on a not-for-profit basis with no dividends paid out. Any surpluses made are spent on things such as improvements to homes and services or repaying loans;
- regulated by the Housing Corporation, a government body that monitors and regulates all registered social landlords.

Being a registered social landlord in its own right gives Parkway Green a large degree of independence and local control.

## What are Parkway Green's aims?

Parkway Green's main purpose is to provide and

manage affordable, quality homes for people who need them. Parkway Green would also adopt the following aims and objectives:

- to provide affordable quality homes and services;
- to build effective partnerships with tenants and leaseholders;
- to keep the promises made to tenants prior to the ballot;
- to work with committed staff to build the reputation of Parkway Green Housing Trust;
- to be financially viable;
- to be cost effective, efficient and to monitor and evaluate all aspects of performance;
- to adopt best practice in all activities, with clear policies and procedures;
- to work towards increasing choice and to provide homes and services for people in need, including those in need of care and support;
- to work with others to improve the quality of life for all residents in the area;
- to put West Wythenshawe first.

## Who is on the board of management?

An unpaid voluntary board would manage Parkway Green Housing Trust. If transfer takes place, the board would have overall responsibility for the management of your homes. The board would have five tenant directors, five Council directors (selected by the City Council), and five independent directors.

At present there is a shadow board in place. It would become the full board if the tenants vote in favour of the transfer proposal and once Parkway Green is registered as a company. The tenant shadow board directors are:



### **BAGULEY WARD REPRESENTATIVES**

**Wyn Casey** has been a tenant in Newall Green for 47 years and has been an active member

of the local tenant and resident association for 23 years. Wyn is the current secretary of the Newall Green Tenants and Residents Association and is actively involved in a wide range of community initiatives to address environmental problems and crime in the area.



**Gina Hall** has been a tenant in Royal Oak for 15 years and is the current secretary of the Royal Oak Community Action Group.

Gina has been actively involved in developing community and environmental projects to benefit the tenants of the Royal Oak estate.



**Allan Frost** is a committee member of the Baguley North Tenants and Residents Association. Allan has lived in the Wythenshawe area all of his life and has been a tenant

in Baguley for the last forty years. Allan has a keen interest in environmental issues.

#### **BROOKLANDS WARD REPRESENTATIVE**



**Steve Peckitt** has been a tenant in Brooklands for fifteen years and is the current Vice Chair of the Brooklands Tenants and Residents Association.

Steve has a background in the construction industry and is keen to be involved in making sure the improvement programme is delivered within its timescales and that it meets the expectations of local people.

#### **NORTHENDEN WARD REPRESENTATIVE**



**Bernard Caine** has been a tenant in Northern Moor for twelve years and is currently the Chair of the Rackhouse and Northern Moor Tenants and Residents Association.

Bernard is also Chair of the Manchester Residents Association and is actively involved in promoting tenant involvement in the delivery of housing services.

## **How were they chosen?**

The tenant shadow board directors were chosen through a process that invited all Manchester City Council tenants who are part of the proposed transfer in the West Wythenshawe areas to put forward nominations. The nominated tenant directors were then shortlisted and interviewed by a panel of local tenant representatives, drawn from each of the wards covering the West Wythenshawe area. This selection made sure that at least one tenant director for each of the Baguley, Brooklands and Northenden Wards was selected.

Manchester City Council nominated the Council shadow board directors. They are:



#### **Councillor Tony Burns**

Tony has been an elected Councillor since 1976 and has represented the Baguley Ward for all of this service. Tony also actively serves on a number of

committees including Wythenshawe Consultative, the National Parking Adjudication Service, Licensing & Appeals. Tony has a background in law and economics and continues to be a vocal supporter of council house improvements.



#### **Councillor Glynn Evans**

Glynn has represented Brooklands Ward as an elected Councillor for 11 years. Glynn also serves on the Licensing & Appeals and the Social

Strategy and Wythenshawe Area committees. Formally a community activist he set up Northern Moor T&RA. He was a governor for over 25 years at Rackhouse Primary School and co-established the Wythenshawe Youth Theatre. He has lived in Wythenshawe all his life.



#### **Councillor Mike Kane**

Mike has lived in the Wythenshawe area all his life and has been an elected Councillor for the Northenden ward since 1991. Mike also

serves on the Physical Environment and Wythenshawe Area committees and is a school teacher. Mike has a keen interest in music, cycling and Manchester City football team.



**Steve Rumbelow** Steve is currently Director of Housing and has played a key role in developing the housing transfer proposals for the West Wythenshawe area

with local tenants and councillors. Steve was previously head of Housing Management for the Council and before that worked with Leeds City Council heading estate management services.

## Independent Board Directors

An advertisement was placed in the local press inviting applications for the independent shadow board members. The independent directors were appointed by the tenant and council directors on the basis of their skills and experience. The independent board directors are:



**Simon Ashdown**

Simon is a Development Director with the urban regeneration company LPC, and combines a

commercial background with a track record of working closely with local residents and local authorities to deliver affordable homes in sustainable neighbourhoods. Simon has a background in surveying and an understanding of property management and contracts.



**Hilda Kaponda**

Hilda is Director of Finance and Corporate Services at Eastlands Homes and brings strong finance and business skills to the shadow board.

Hilda has previous experience of being part of a registered social landlord board, and she has played an active role in the work of a number of community and voluntary organisations.



**Jane McCall**

Jane is an independent consultant and was until recently a Managing Director for a housing association in the northwest. She brings to

the shadow board both a strategic and an operational understanding of the issues involved in managing a registered social landlord, and has a background in asset management and experience of work in regeneration. Jane lives in West Wythenshawe.



**David Teale**

David has recently stepped down as Managing Director of Manchester Airport Aviation Services and brings business strategy and change

management skills, as well as extensive experience of operations and service delivery to the shadow board. David is practiced in working at board level with both private and public sector partners, and has sat on the Wythenshawe Forum Partnership Board.

## How would board directors be chosen in the future?

Tenant and independent board directors would serve for a term of up to three years. Tenant directors would be elected by local tenants to ensure you have a say in who you want to represent you on this board in the future. Manchester City Council would choose the local authority directors, and the independent directors would be selected from the community for their skills and would be appointed on the recommendation of the remaining directors of Parkway Green.

## Who would provide the service?

Parkway Green would employ paid officers to run the housing service on a day-to-day basis, initially from the existing offices within the area. If tenants vote in favour of the transfer proposals, Parkway Green will run a local service

from Bowland Road Housing Office. Parkway Green will look for an additional office base during the first year after transfer. By and large, the staff there would be the staff who currently provide the service now, so you would continue to deal with the people you know. However some additional new staff may also be appointed to complete the range of skills needed.

## Who regulates and monitors Parkway Green?

The Housing Corporation is the government appointed body that monitors and regulates all registered social landlords. Parkway Green must register with the Housing Corporation as a registered social landlord before a transfer can take place. Amongst other things, the Housing Corporation aims to regulate and promote a viable, properly governed and properly managed housing association sector.

In particular, the Housing Corporation:

- requires compliance with its regulatory code to ensure that tenants' rights are protected, services are of a high quality and that financial management is sound;
- monitors the performance of registered social landlords to ensure compliance with the code. If not, the Housing Corporation has wide powers to intervene.

As well as being regulated by the Housing Corporation, Parkway Green would also be inspected by the government's Housing Inspectorate from the Audit Commission. This is the body that inspects all local authority housing departments and registered social landlords to ensure they are continuously improving standards of service.

## Would there be an independent person we can complain to?

Council tenants have the right to have their complaints taken to the Local Government Ombudsman, who has powers to look into

cases of maladministration by local councils. Councils must take notice of any recommendations made, although they cannot be forced to implement them.

Tenants of Parkway Green would have the right to take their complaints to the Independent Housing Ombudsman (IHO), after going through Parkway Green's internal complaints procedure. The Secretary of State has approved the IHO scheme. All registered social landlords must belong to the scheme and are expected to comply with the Ombudsman's findings.

## Would the Council have any control over Parkway Green?

Parkway Green would be independent from the City Council. However, Manchester City Council would have a legally binding contract with Parkway Green, through which the City Council would make sure that promises made in this booklet are kept. Council directors on the board would also work in partnership with tenant and independent directors to make sure that council services provided to the area continue to improve.

## Where would Parkway Green get the money from to pay for the housing and improvements?

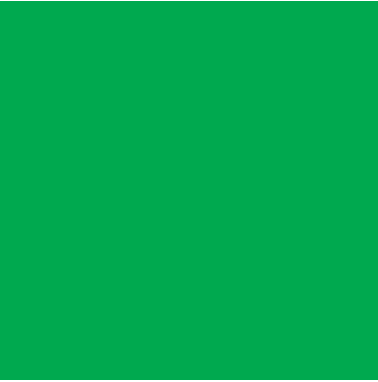
The government, through its gap funding programme for negative value estate transfers would give funding to Parkway Green who will build this into the business plan. Parkway Green can then borrow the rest of the money from private lenders such as banks and building societies to pay for the improvements and carry out repairs. This loan would usually be taken out for a period of 25 to 30 years. Repayment of the loan would be covered through rental income.

Parkway Green will also maintain financial records so that it can be shown that the rent income from the West Wythenshawe areas is being spent on and supporting local home improvements, developments and services to those areas.

## **What safeguards are there if Parkway Green gets into financial difficulty?**

Parkway Green would have a thirty-year business plan for West Wythenshawe that would be monitored by the board and checked out by independent financial advisors.

The Housing Corporation is the government body that regulates and keeps a close eye on registered social landlords and can step in to protect tenants interests if it looks as if things may go wrong.





## 3 Improving your home

## What is in this part of the booklet?

- What work would Parkway Green do and how long would it take them?
- What happens if you have already modernised part of your home?
- How the work will be done
- How Parkway Green would make sure that the work was done properly
- Information on improvements carried out by tenants
- What Parkway Green would do about future maintenance of the homes
- How day-to-day repairs would operate
- Who would do the work

## What work would Parkway Green do and how long would it take them?

### Improving your home

This section describes the improvements that would be undertaken if the transfer goes ahead to those homes that have not had them in the last five years.

### Timing of the improvements

As soon as possible after transfer (assumed to take place June 2006), a programme of major improvements to the whole area would begin. Parkway Green intends to invest around £90 million in home improvements during the first five years after transfer. The programme will improve homes to modern standards – beyond the government's Decent Homes Standard.

Parkway Green will carry out improvements to your home in the most effective and least disruptive way possible. No one should need to move out of their home whilst the work is being done.

### Who would do the work?

The Parkway Green board and local tenant representatives would help choose the building

contractors who would do the work.

The contractors must give good value for money and have an excellent record of doing similar work. They would follow high standards of conduct in your home and would have specialist staff you can talk to about the work. They will also provide job opportunities for local people.

Working with the contractors Parkway Green and its consultants would prepare detailed contracts for the investment programme, based on the stock condition survey carried out recently and the priorities identified in consultation with tenants and residents. Parkway Green should be in a position to start on site soon after the formal transfer planned for June 2006.

### Environment

Parkway Green has put aside an allowance of £9 million for environmental schemes in the first 5 years after the proposed transfer planned for June 2006, with more money being made available for these schemes in the 5 years after that. Parkway Green will work with local people to develop the environmental programme.

### Improvements to homes

You have told us that a big priority is making your homes secure and modern. The Improvements are geared to achieve this and will be carried out to all homes that haven't had them in the last five years. The improvement programme will include:

- New high quality and secure PVCu double glazed windows for all homes that do not already have them;
- New high quality and secure external front and back doors;
- A new fitted kitchen designed for your own home together with vinyl flooring, tiling, redecoration and updates to the electrical fittings in your new kitchen including an extractor fan wherever possible (this does not include cookers, fridges, or other white goods).

- A new bathroom suite including a shower over the bath together with vinyl flooring, tiling to three walls and redecoration.

A range of styles and colours will be available for tenants to choose from.

In addition, Parkway Green will offer:

- A new upstairs toilet to homes that do not have one (where space allows) or alternatively a wash hand rinse basin for the downstairs toilets that do not have one.
- Utility rooms inside the homes will be improved (plastering, decorating and vinyl flooring) and plumbed for a washing machine, if wanted by the tenant.
- Rewiring, where required, to modern standards including a smoke detector and front and back security lighting where needed.
- Heating system upgrades to ensure reliability and maximise energy efficiency, for those homes that need it.
- Increased energy efficiency of your home through loft and cavity wall insulation for those homes that need it.

These are the main priorities that would be tackled in the first five years after transfer. It is unlikely that anyone would have to move out while the improvement work is carried out. The improvements would be carried out with minimum disruption and Parkway Green would work with contractors who are sympathetic to your needs.

### **The environment**

Parkway Green plans a further investment of £9 million in the environment surrounding the homes. Parkway Green will work with local people to develop the priorities for this money. Parkway Green will also actively pursue other funding opportunities, and work with others to help improve the environment.

### **Would Parkway Green maintain our homes properly in the future?**

One of the aims of the transfer proposal is to make sure that there is enough money in the future to maintain homes to a good standard. Therefore, Parkway Green would have the money needed to make sure that items within your homes, for example central heating boilers, were replaced when they had reached the end of their useful life, and maintenance such as re-roofing and pointing are done when needed.

### **What would happen with day-to-day repairs?**

Parkway Green would be responsible for all repairs that are currently the responsibility of the City Council. You would not have to pay for any repairs that you do not pay for with the Council. More details on repairs are in part 5 of this booklet.

### **If the transfer does not go ahead, the City Council would continue to carry out its legal repairing obligations as a landlord.**

The City Council only has limited money to carry out essential repairs and improvements in the area and does not expect to be able to carry out the improvements promised above in the foreseeable future. The Council must also consider the needs of its other tenants who have not had any improvements carried out.

### **Which of these improvement works would we pay extra for?**

None of them. The major improvements programme – new kitchens, bathrooms, double glazing and new doors – is paid for by your rent, which means that there would be no other separate charges for these improvements if the transfer goes ahead.

### **What happens if I have modernised parts of my home myself?**

You may have already made some of the improvements planned. As long as the work has been done safely and to a certain standard you can ask Parkway Green to leave the work untouched. So if you have fitted your own

kitchen, or, for example, a new entrance door, you can keep these if you wish.

### **How would you make sure the work is done properly?**

You have told us that work should be monitored closely. Parkway Green would employ dedicated project management and surveying teams to fully consult you and to supervise this work programme. A satisfaction survey would be carried out following each main phase of the improvement works.

### **Would we still have the right to do our own improvements?**

Yes. You would still be able to improve your home, with the appropriate permission from Parkway Green, and any planning or other consents you may need. If you do improve your home you may be entitled to compensation if you move home.

### **What happens if I have to move out while the works are carried out?**

It is very unlikely that anyone would have to move out while the improvement work is being carried out. The improvement work would be carried out with the minimum disruption and Parkway Green would work with contractors that are sympathetic to your needs. In addition, Parkway Green would set up a temporary centre if you need a break for an hour or two during the day while work is being carried out to your home.

In the unlikely event of the disruption being too great or if there would be health and safety risks, a few people may have to move out for a short time. In this event, Parkway Green would provide temporary accommodation and cover the costs of this temporary move.



## 4 Your rent

## What is in this part of the booklet?

- Rent promise and rent restructuring
- What rents you would pay if the transfer goes ahead
- Typical rents after transfer
- No hidden charges
- Service charges
- The rent new tenants would pay
- The different ways you could pay rent
- The right to continue claiming housing benefit
- What Parkway Green would do about rent arrears.

## Rent promise and rent restructuring

Parkway Green is committed to keeping rents affordable in West Wythenshawe. If the transfer goes ahead, Parkway Green would give you the following rent promise:

- On the day of transfer there would be no change in rents that you pay to the City Council at that date.
- There would be no rent increase with Parkway Green until the first April after the date of transfer – April 2007.
- Rent increases would happen only once a year.
- You would continue to have two “rent free” weeks every year.

The government has introduced reforms that have changed the way that rents are set for both council and registered social landlord homes. This involves the calculation of “target” rents that councils and registered social landlords must aim for. Under current government policy, once these target rents have been reached, future rents would only increase by the level of inflation as measured by the

Retail Price Index (RPI) plus 0.5% every year. The calculations are based on regional average earnings, the number of bedrooms in a property and local property values, to ensure that rents are kept affordable in the long term.

Your property value will increase as improvements are carried out, but this has been taken into account in the rent increases shown in the table below. The idea behind the government’s reforms is that in 6 years’ time councils and registered social landlords in each part of the country will be charging broadly similar rents for similar types of home in that area.

## What would happen to rents if the transfer goes ahead?

There would be no immediate rent increase by Parkway Green – the first rent increase would take place on the first Monday in the April after transfer – April 2007. On this date, and for the next five years to follow, rents would increase broadly as set out in the following table, if we assume that inflation (RPI) increases each year at 2.5%:

NUMBER OF BEDROOMS IN YOUR HOME				
YEAR	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
2007/08	£1.39	£1.97	£2.11	£2.22
2008/09	£1.44	£2.05	£2.19	£2.30
2009/10	£1.49	£2.13	£2.26	£2.38
2010/11	£1.54	£2.21	£2.34	£2.46
2011/12	£1.59	£2.29	£2.42	£2.54

It should be noted that these figures will vary a little from home to home, as this is just an average. And remember that double glazing will help you save money on your fuel bills. If the government rent reforms remain unchanged, then after 2011 rents are planned to go up by inflation (RPI) plus 0.5%, which is the guideline limit for all registered social landlords.

## What improvements are paid for in rent rises?

The major improvements programme – new kitchens, bathrooms, double glazing and new

doors -- is covered by your rent, which means that there would be no other charges for these improvements. However, homes that do not have central heating currently pay a little less rent than those that do (currently about £1.25 per week). So homes that do not have central heating at the moment will be charged that little extra when it is fitted – so that everyone is charged on the same basis. The same goes for homes that may have a hard standing installed. Like Manchester City Council, Parkway Green will charge a little extra in weekly rent (currently about 70p) for these but nothing can be changed without your permission.

### Service charges

Some City Council tenants currently pay a charge on top of their rent for things like heating or furniture. Parkway Green would continue to charge a service charge for these items. The rent after transfer would pay for the full range of services you get now from the City Council – managing the estates, repairing your home and maintaining the landscape. There would be no hidden service charges. There would be no service charges for any of the planned improvement works described in this booklet.

In the future, if you wanted Parkway Green to provide extra services, these would be paid for by a new service charge, but this would not happen without full consultation with all tenants affected by the change.

### What rents would new tenants pay?

New tenants would be charged for rent on the same basis as transferring tenants. Parkway Green's rents for new tenants would be the same (for similar types of home) as for tenants who transfer, and would increase at broadly the same rate.

### What methods could we use to pay our rent?

You would still be able to pay your rent in a number of ways, including:

- at Parkway Green's Housing Office, paying over the counter;
- at a Post Office by using a rent payment card;
- by standing order;
- by post - (cheque payment);
- by telephoning and paying with your debit or credit card.

### What about those people on housing benefit?

Under the current rules, the transfer would not affect your entitlement to claim housing benefit. Applications would continue to be made to the City Council and Manchester City Council would make payments to those who qualify, or directly to Parkway Green. Advice would be available from both the City Council and Parkway Green.

The only exception to the above is for those tenants that currently live on the Larch Close estate who would make their applications to Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council and Trafford would make payments to those who qualify, or directly to Parkway Green.

### Council Tax

You would continue to pay Council Tax to Manchester City Council after the transfer unless you live on the Larch Close estate where your Council Tax would continue to be payable to Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.

### What would Parkway Green's policy be on rent arrears?

Anyone who owes rent to Manchester City Council at the time of transfer would still owe those arrears, but the debt would be to Parkway Green rather than the City Council after the transfer. If tenants have a written agreement with the Council to pay off arrears at a certain amount each week, the tenant must keep to the same amount after transfer. The agreement simply switches to Parkway Green instead.

Parkway Green would rely on people paying their rent so that it can make your area a better place to live.

As a responsible social landlord it has firm but fair policies towards people who don't pay their rent. Parkway Green would contact anyone who is behind with his or her rent to discuss the problem. Parkway Green would make sure that tenants can get debt counselling and benefit advice, and would work out a sensible way for people to pay off rent arrears over a period of time. But, like the Council, Parkway Green would take legal action against people who won't pay or who fail to keep to an agreement. Transfer would not remove a tenant's responsibility to clear rent arrears.

### **Contents insurance**

Parkway Green would make arrangements so that tenants who are already insured through the City Council's contents insurance scheme would be able to keep this insurance cover and would continue to offer an insurance scheme for all tenants.



## 5 Housing service standards you can expect

## What is in this part of the booklet?

- Parkway Green's proposals to improve housing services
- Local service
- Service standards
- Crime and nuisance
- Complaints
- Repairs
- Management services
- Rights of new tenants

### A local service

Parkway Green would provide you with a locally based housing service.

Parkway Green would have a head office in the area to provide services to tenants in the area and the wider community. As well as being able to call in at any time during office opening hours:

- you would be able to make appointments to see staff at the office or in your own home;
- you would also be able to make contact by telephone during office opening hours;
- you will be able to access a range of online services through the Parkway Green website;
- Parkway Green will also provide an emergency repairs service for nights and weekends.

### A local team

Parkway Green would work from a local office and the staff would have the skills to:

- Run an effective local office;
- Ensure the improvements run smoothly;
- Deliver a fast and efficient housing service;
- Develop community initiatives;
- Control repairs and maintenance budgets.

Parkway Green would also support continuous

improvements in managing the neighbourhood by contributing to the running of:

- Environment teams;
- Neighbour nuisance services.

### Service standards

After consulting local people, Parkway Green has agreed a set of service standards through the board. The standards would cover the range of services provided by Parkway Green, and set the quality of service that tenants can expect to receive. These standards would also be in line with the Housing Corporation's regulatory code and guidance. For example standards would cover lettings, repairs, landscape maintenance, and the way in which tenants are dealt with by staff. The standards are published, and are used as a benchmark against which performance can be judged.

Each year, Parkway Green would provide all tenants with a report on how well it is doing in meeting key performance indicators. The board would also regularly review service standards in consultation with tenants and residents.

### If things go wrong

Parkway Green would have a clear complaints procedure, and would study all complaints in a way that helps find ways of improving the service. Tenants would also have the right to take their complaints to the Independent Housing Ombudsman (IHO), after going through Parkway Green's internal complaints procedure.

### Repairs

Parkway Green has set target times for responding to requests for repairs.

The target times depend on how urgently the work is needed, as follows:

#### REPAIR TYPE & RESPONSE TIME

- Emergency (things like a major burst or a complete power failure) – 3 hours
- Glazing – 3 hours if your home is insecure otherwise 3 working days

- Minor gas/electric -- 3 working days
- Urgent repairs – 3 working days
- Normal repairs – 5 working days
- Larger day to day jobs – 15 working days
- Major Works (e.g. structural repairs) – 30 working days

## Reporting repairs

You would continue to report repairs in much the same way that you do at present; this would include, for example:

- telephoning your request through during office hours;
- calling out an emergency repairs service outside office hours;
- writing to Parkway Green;
- calling into Parkway Green offices;
- reporting the repair to your housing officer;
- online by logging onto the Parkway Green website;
- texting.

## Appointments service

Parkway Green would set up a convenient system of appointments for most repairs. Appointments could be made up to 5pm on a weekday.

## Checking quality

Parkway Green would carry out regular repairs satisfaction surveys to find out what you think about repairs you have had done. By giving you the chance to say how well or badly the repairs service is running, Parkway Green would be able to check and improve the service and deal with individual complaints.

## Who would actually do the work and how would it be supervised?

Parkway Green will make sure that all work that is not carried out by its own staff is done by

competent contractors, and is supervised both by the contractor's management and by Parkway Green's own staff or specialist advisors. It would be required to do this, both by its own rules and by those of its regulator, the Housing Corporation. All contractors will have to apply to be accepted onto Parkway Green's select contractor list before they would be allowed to tender for work. This means that they would be checked out for their financial stability, competence to do the work, track record and equal opportunities.

All contractors will need to keep to Parkway Green's high performance standards. Parkway Green will take action against any contractor it uses to do repairs if that contractor consistently performs below the standards set. If their service is not good enough Parkway Green would not continue to use them.

The Council has agreed that it would do day-to-day repairs for Parkway Green for up to the first year after transfer. The same arrangements would apply to grounds maintenance. This would mean that Parkway Green would be entering into a contract with the City Council for these services.

Like other contractors, Contracting and Operational Services would need to keep to Parkway Green's high performance standards.

Parkway Green would put out contracts to competitive tender and the Council's services would be treated in the same way as other contractors bidding for the contracts.

## Maintaining communal grassed areas

Parkway Green would review the arrangements and performance standards for this service. Parkway Green is committed to working with tenants to develop standards and improve satisfaction. Parkway Green would involve tenants in any review of these services.

## Management Issues

Parkway Green would provide a responsive

housing service across the area. To achieve this Parkway Green would pay particular attention to issues that have been a particular problem in the past.

These include:

### **Neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour:**

Parkway Green will act quickly and firmly where this is reported, providing support to all tenants who are victims of this behaviour. Parkway Green will also liaise closely with the local police (through an existing data exchange protocol) and promote crime prevention and security through improvement programmes. It will also work closely with other social landlords to exchange information on new tenants and maintain good practice within the limits allowed by the Data Protection Act, and to ensure that any cases of anti-social behaviour are dealt with effectively regardless of whose tenants are involved.

Parkway Green would enter into a contract with the City Council for the delivery of a dedicated neighbour nuisance and mediation service. Parkway Green recognises that neighbour nuisance is caused by people living in all types of housing and would work with the police to use its influence to deal with any neighbour nuisance cases in private sector housing.

### **Crime and security**

Parkway Green will work with the police and other agencies to tackle crime and safety across the area. It will build in enhanced security measures through the improvement works, such as secure lockable double glazed windows and new secure external doors.

### **Lettings and transfers**

Parkway Green would develop a lettings policy for the West Wythenshawe area through the board. This must meet the requirements of the Housing Corporation's Regulatory Code.

The policy would have the following objectives:

- To provide choices for housing applicants;

- To provide homes for those in greatest need e.g. people living in overcrowded conditions, households unsuitably housed because of medical problems, and homeless people;
- To make sure as far as possible that homes are let to new tenants who can successfully manage a tenancy, and who do not have a track record of serious misbehaviour. So Parkway Green can refuse to put applicants with a history of anti-social behaviour onto its rehousing list;
- To give priority to those with a strong connection with the area, helping to build up the local community. This might include those with dependent relatives living in the area, those working within and close to the area, and those with children at local schools;
- To work with you and local tenant and resident associations to use local community agreements where you feel these would be of benefit;
- To make sure that existing tenants have the opportunity to move within West Wythenshawe (subject to being in housing need), and outside the area, as their needs change;
- To take into account the needs of neighbours and the rest of the local community;
- To allocate homes in a way which treats all applicants fairly, guaranteeing equality of opportunity.

Tenants would have the opportunity to request a move within the West Wythenshawe area or to another Parkway Green home in the area. Priority for transfers would be based upon need and the availability of suitable homes. Parkway Green would also participate in a national scheme to assist tenants who wish to move to a home owned by a different landlord in Manchester, or another part of the country. This is called the Housing Organisations Mobility and Exchange Scheme (HOMES). If you moved to another Parkway Green home following

transfer you would keep the extra protected rights, including the preserved Right to Buy your home. Any remaining rent promise would apply to the rent then payable for your new home.

Tenants would also have a right to exchange their home with other tenants (including tenants of other social landlords) in exactly the same way as they currently can as City Council tenants. This is written into the new assured tenancy agreement for secure tenants.

## Rights of new tenants

Parkway Green would give new tenants \*who move in after the transfer assured shorthold tenancies. These are temporary tenancies known as 'starter tenancies', which offer similar rights to the City Council's introductory tenancy. If there have been no problems after twelve months, these tenants would get a full non-shorthold assured tenancy, but without the Preserved Right to Buy. However, they would have a different Right to Buy scheme called the Right to Acquire.

Parkway Green would check everyone who applies for one of its homes to find out whether they have a history of anti-social behaviour. All applicants will be interviewed and asked for references. Parkway Green will offer some homes to people from Manchester City Council's rehousing lists, but these potential tenants will have to go through the same checking procedure as people who apply directly to Parkway Green.

*\* who are not already secure or assured tenants. A new tenant is anyone who is not a tenant of the Council at the time of the transfer OR is a tenant of the Council at the time of the transfer but does not live in the area affected by the transfer.*

## Other issues

### Concessionary gardening and decorating

Parkway Green will continue the City Council's policy of helping elderly and disabled tenants with both gardening and some internal decoration. These services will be subject to financial resources, but will operate as a

minimum at the same level as with the City Council.

### Value added services

Parkway Green will continue to use the following value added services from the City Council up to 2008. Using these services will allow Parkway Green an opportunity to develop a strategy for the competitive tendering of these services:

- Procurement of office supplies;
- Furnished accommodation services;
- Homefinder and the Common Housing Register;
- Mobile cleaning of estate wide and communal areas;
- On-Call telephone service
- Publications and information technology support services.

## Garages

Parkway Green will make necessary repairs where garage sites are well used. Parkway Green would also consult fully with the community before any changes take place.



6

Involving  
you in  
running the  
service

## What is in this part of the booklet?

- Parkway Green and tenant participation
- How you could get involved in Parkway Green
- How tenants would be involved in monitoring the quality of service

## What is Parkway Green's view on tenant participation?

Parkway Green sees tenant involvement as an integral part of high quality service delivery. As a minimum Parkway Green will adopt the City Council's city wide tenant compact. Parkway Green will develop this policy and ensure that its tenant participation policy complies with the Housing Corporation's guidelines in the regulatory code. The policy will set out Parkway Green's commitment to consulting and involving tenants.

Importantly, Parkway Green also plans to develop new structures to enable tenants and residents to monitor local services and check that rents from West Wythenshawe are being spent on or supporting local services, developments and home improvements.

## How could tenants get involved in Parkway Green?

Tenants would be able to get involved at a level that suits them best. This could include:

- Getting involved in the proposed new structures that will enable residents to monitor local services;
- Joining a local tenants and resident association, membership of which is open to anyone living in the relevant area;
- Joining a working party or review group for specific topics or problems.

## Existing tenant and resident groups

Parkway Green would continue to support

existing tenant and resident groups and would encourage and support the formation of new groups.

Tenant management options would be available for consideration, subject to the approval of Parkway Green. Parkway Green will provide accommodation for community use in the West Wythenshawe area. This will be a place where tenant and resident groups can meet, and can be used as a resource for the community.

## How could we be involved in monitoring the quality of service?

Parkway Green would carry out a range of customer satisfaction surveys in partnership with tenants on a regular basis to make sure that the service is meeting your needs. It would act on the results of these surveys to improve and develop services.



7

## Your rights after the transfer

## What is in this part of the booklet?

- How the transfer would affect your rights
- What rights you would no longer have after a transfer
- How your rights would be protected
- Your Right to Buy and the discount system
- The new Right to Acquire
- The ability to pass on your home
- The ability to transfer and exchange your home
- How Parkway Green could get possession of your home
- The Right to Repair
- The Right to Consultation

## How would my rights be affected if the transfer goes ahead?

Most council tenants are secure tenants, although some (if they have recently been given a tenancy for the first time) are introductory tenants. With Parkway Green, a secure tenant would become an assured tenant with protected rights. The main difference is that as a secure or introductory council tenant, the rights you now enjoy are set down in law by Acts of Parliament. As an assured tenant with Parkway Green, your rights would be covered partly by Acts of Parliament and partly by a contract (your tenancy agreement) between you and Parkway Green.

As the statutory rights of an assured tenant are less than for a council secure tenant, Parkway Green would agree to extend your assured tenancy rights so that you have the same legal protection you currently have as a secure Council tenant, and so you would keep all except one of the rights you have now. You would also gain some new rights. The new assured tenancy agreement, which sets out your rights and protection, will be substantially in the form of the agreement set out in the second booklet \* sent with this document and it would

be a binding legal contract between you and Parkway Green. Under current law, Parkway Green cannot take these protected rights away or reduce them without your agreement.

However if at the time of the transfer a valid possession order exists against you, you will not receive a new tenancy agreement. If the court order is subsequently discharged you would then be entitled to receive a transferring assured tenancy agreement.

The table overleaf compares the rights that secure City Council tenants have now with those that you would have as a Parkway Green tenant if the transfer goes ahead. Introductory tenants have fewer rights than secure tenants. A detailed comparison of secure, introductory and assured tenants' rights is available from the City Council (See Part 11).

*\* Introductory tenants will have the shorthold agreement (temporary tenancy agreement with this booklet).*

# Your rights before and after transfer

	RIGHTS WITH COUNCIL (SECURE TENANTS)	RIGHTS WITH PARKWAY GREEN (ALL SECURE TRANSFERRING TENANTS)
The Rights to Security of Tenure	✓	✓
The Right to buy your home with a discount	✓	✓
The Right of Succession (the ability to pass on your home)	✓	✓
The Right to Exchange	✓	✓
The Right to Sublet or take in lodgers (with the landlords' consent)	✓	✓
The Right to Repair	✓	✓
The Right to carry out improvements and receive compensation	✓	✓
The Right to be Consulted	✓	✓
The Right to information	✓	✓
The Right of Assignment (the right to pass your tenancy to someone else in certain circumstances e.g. by court order in a divorce)	✓	✓
The Right to Manage	✓	X
The right not to have your tenancy agreement changed (except for rent and service charges) without your individual consent	X	✓
The Right to Acquire (see page 35)	X	✓

## The rights you don't keep

Only one of your current rights would not be written into your new agreement and this does not have any effect on the security of your tenancy.

The Right to Manage is the right to set up a tenant management organisation to manage an estate. Council tenants can get funding from the government to pay for advice to help them make this happen. Although this right won't be in the new agreement, Parkway Green would support any group of tenants looking at this and make sure that they have access to the advice they need to make it happen. If tenant management of particular homes becomes a realistic option it could be undertaken, subject to consent and approval from Parkway Green.

## How would our rights be protected?

If the transfer takes place, transferring tenants would be asked to sign a new tenancy agreement (see the second booklet sent with this document). Once you and Parkway Green sign the tenancy agreement, your rights in that agreement cannot be changed without your permission. The only things that can change are the weekly rent (subject to the rent promise set out in this booklet) and the service charge.

## Introductory tenants

Introductory tenants who transfer would continue to have fewer rights than secure tenants who transfer until they have completed their twelve-month tenancy. People with introductory tenancies at the time of transfer would serve the rest of the introductory period on a Parkway Green assured shorthold tenancy. If you are an introductory tenant, the agreement which sets out these more limited rights and protections will be substantially in the form of the agreement set out in the booklet called 'Draft Shorthold (Starter) Tenancy Agreement', sent with this document\*. After the completion of twelve months (and if there have been no serious breaches of tenancy) the shorthold tenancy would be converted to a full assured tenancy, with the rights of transferring

tenants (including the rent promise), but not including the Right to Buy (but would have the Right to Acquire).

## Charter for Housing Association applicants and residents

As assured tenants with a registered social landlord, you are covered by the Charter for Housing Association applicants and residents. This document is produced by the Housing Corporation and tells you what legal rights you have as an assured tenant and explains what you can expect from your landlord.

*\* If you are an introductory tenant and you do not have the 'Draft Shorthold (Starter) Tenancy Agreement', please call Manchester City Council on 0161 234 4356 to request your copy.*

## Would we still be able to buy our homes?

If you have the Right to Buy your home with the City Council, you would continue to have a Preserved Right to Buy with Parkway Green.

These schemes are very similar and the price you would pay for your home would continue to be based on its market value less your discount, which would be calculated in the same way.

These rights remain with you or any member of your family who succeeds you, even if you later move to another home that is owned by Parkway Green, as long as it is not exempt from the Right to Buy. Therefore, if you have the Preserved Right to Buy and you move to another home owned by Parkway Green not exempted from the Right to Buy, you would keep your preserved Right to Buy and any relevant discounts.

Introductory tenants do not have a Right to Buy with the City Council.

Some City Council homes are currently excluded from the Right to Buy. These include elderly

person and sheltered accommodation, and this would continue to be the case with Parkway Green. After the transfer, future new tenants would not have the Preserved Right to Buy but would have the Right to Acquire (see below).

## What happens to discounts?

Any discount you have built up would transfer with you and would continue to increase while you are a tenant of Parkway Green, up to a maximum amount – which is currently £26,000 in the Manchester area (this limit applies to the Right to Buy and the Preserved Right to Buy), for both Council and registered social landlord tenants.

## The cost floor

This is the minimum price that you could pay for your home even if your discount would otherwise take the price below this amount.

The cost floor rules allow Parkway Green to take the following costs into account when calculating the Right to Buy cost floor:

- cost of acquisition (buying);
- repairs where the costs exceed £5,500;
- improvements.

The relevant costs incurred over the previous 15 years before you exercise your Right to Buy would be taken into account.

This takes account of the fact that Parkway Green operates under a different financial regime from the City Council. The 15 year period starts at the point of transfer.

The cost of the improvement works in part 3 of this booklet would be included in the cost floor calculation, even if the works have not been carried out at the time you apply to buy your home.

## What is the Right to Acquire?

New tenants of Parkway Green (as well as existing tenants transferring from the City

Council) would be able to buy their home under the new Right to Acquire scheme as long as certain criteria are met. This scheme is based on a grant rather than a discount and is generally less generous than the Preserved Right to Buy Scheme. The grant for homes in the Manchester area is currently £10,000. You cannot combine both the Right to Acquire and the Preserved Right to Buy.

## Would I still be able to pass on my home?

Parkway Green's tenancy agreement (see the separate booklet sent with this document) allows the same people to take over the tenancy (when a tenant dies) as under a City Council secure tenancy. As with the City Council, your home can only be passed on once other than in exceptional circumstances. Please note you would be counted as a successor if you were a joint tenant at transfer and later become a sole tenant.

## Would I still be able to transfer or exchange?

Parkway Green aims to make best use of its homes by assisting certain transfers and exchanges both within its stock and with other landlords. Exchanges would be subject to similar rules as currently apply with the City Council.

Parkway Green would participate in H.O.M.E.S. (the Housing Organisations Mobility and Exchange Scheme) and the HOMESWAP Scheme, which helps people to move to Council or Registered Social Landlord homes outside the area.

Introductory tenants of the City Council do not currently have a right to exchange.

## Would I still be able to sublet part of my home or take in lodgers?

Yes. You would need Parkway Green's permission to take in lodgers or sub-let part of your home, but Parkway Green would not unreasonably refuse permission.

## **Would Parkway Green have more rights to evict me?**

No. Parkway Green would not use any of the additional grounds for eviction available under an assured tenancy, to make sure your rights to live in your home match as closely as possible those you have now with the City Council. This restriction to the grounds for eviction would be built into your tenancy agreement. Grounds for possession under an assured tenancy differ from those under a secure or introductory tenancy. For further details see the second booklet sent with this document, which includes a copy of Parkway Green's assured tenancy agreement with protected rights.

## **Would I still have a right to have repairs carried out?**

Yes. This means that if Parkway Green or its contractors failed to carry out certain types of repairs within specified time limits, you can require Parkway Green to appoint another contractor to do the repairs. You would have the right to compensation if that contractor also does not do the repairs within a specified time limit.

## **Would Parkway Green consult me in the same way as the city Council?**

Yes. The Housing Corporation would require that Parkway Green consults with and provides information to all its tenants as if they were secure tenants. This is one of the terms in the tenancy agreement.



8

# Your community

## Quality of life

Parkway Green wants to make a real improvement to the quality of life for everyone living in the West Wythenshawe area. Parkway Green is committed to listening to local people and taking action about the things that build a strong community. Parkway Green would work in partnership with key stakeholders in the area to make a real change.

## A community for everyone

Parkway Green wants everyone living in the area to feel part of the community and to see West Wythenshawe as a good place to live. Parkway Green would:

- work in partnership with tenants, residents, voluntary and statutory agencies, community groups, businesses and other people committed to the local area;
- work with others to bring additional resources to the area;
- produce regular newsletters telling people what is going on and about opportunities that come up;
- play a full part in local events that are enjoyed by the community.

## Support for community groups

There are a number of groups working for the benefit of the community. Parkway Green acknowledges the activities of these organisations and would continue to work in partnership with them, as well as with other local community groups and organisations. Working with other partners, Parkway Green would fully contribute to achieve the priorities for community regeneration of the area. These include:

- to take firm and decisive action where there is antisocial behaviour;
- to work closely with the police, the community and other agencies to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour;
- to improve security to homes;

- to work with local people to develop a programme of environmental improvements;
- to develop local job and training opportunities.

## Employment and training

It is essential for the future of the area that opportunities exist for employment and training of local people. Parkway Green would:

- use the improvement programme to provide employment and training opportunities for local people, for example through agreements with contractors;
- provide training for tenants and residents who want a greater involvement in Parkway Green, to help them develop tenant participation skills and confidence;
- encourage local recruitment by Parkway Green itself;
- pursue other training opportunities.

## Working with schools

Parkway Green would develop close links with local schools in West Wythenshawe and develop a range of projects that would help benefit young people.



## 9 Useful contacts names & addresses

### **Manchester City Council**

Contact:  
Alison Blow or Bridget Guilfoyle  
Room 2026  
PO Box 531  
Manchester  
M60 2JX  
**Tel:** 0161 234 4356

### **Parkway Green Transfer Team**

Contact:  
Tony McMahon  
**Tel:** 0161 718 4830

### **Independent Tenants Adviser**

Contact:  
Jackie Grannell  
Indigo Training & Consultancy Ltd  
45 Cable House  
Cheapside  
Liverpool  
L2 2SX  
**Tel:** 0800 146 702 (freephone)

## **YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS**

### **Baguley Ward Councillors**

Councillor Paul Andrews  
43 Greatfield Road  
MANCHESTER  
M22 9RU  
**Tel:** 0161 498 8907

Councillor Edward McCulley  
60 Stoneacre Road  
MANCHESTER  
M22 1BN  
**Tel:** 0161 436 2480

Councillor Tony Burns  
39 Paulden Avenue  
MANCHESTER  
M23 1 PH  
**Tel:** 0161 998 5784

### **Brooklands Ward Councillors**

Councillor Glynn Evans  
38 Mossdale Road  
MANCHESTER  
M23 0NR  
**Tel:** 0161 998 5366

Councillor Susan Cooley  
43 Sandacre Road  
MANCHESTER  
M23 1AE  
**Tel:** 0161 998 5234

Councillor Sue Murphy  
19f Lawngreen Avenue  
MANCHESTER  
M21 8FH  
**Tel:** 0161 881 8650

### **Northenden Ward**

Councillor Mike Kane  
22 Beech Avenue  
MANCHESTER  
M22 4JE  
**Tel:** 0161 945 5331

Councillor Ian Wilmott  
1A Morrell Road  
MANCHESTER  
M22 4WJ  
**Tel:** 0161 613 1312

Councillor Richard Cowell  
40 Cherington Close  
MANCHESTER  
M23 0FE  
**Tel:** 0161 998 3780

## **YOUR LOCAL TENANT AND RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS**

### **Baguley North** Tenants & Residents Association

Contact: Grant Higginson on 0161 945 1103

### **Bideford Drive** Tenants & Residents Association

Contact: Eva Mulholland on 0161 946 0699

### **Brooklands** Tenants & Residents Association

Contact: Ged Petty on 0161 998 1667

### **Newall Green** Tenants & Residents Association

Contact Wyn Casey on 0161 998 4970

**Rackhouse & Northern Moor** Tenants & Residents Association  
Contact: Bernard Caine on 0161 613 5662

**Royal Oak** Community Action Group  
Contact: Gina Hall on 0161 946 0284

**Royal Green** Tenants & Residents Association  
Contact: Steve Thompson on 0161 945 7601

**Shenton** Tenants & Residents Association  
Contact: Leah Downs on 0161 998 4984

**The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)**

The Housing Transfer Team  
Zone 2/D1  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU

**The Housing Corporation**

Stock Transfer Registration Unit (STRU)  
Attenborough House  
109/119 Charles Street  
Leicester  
LE1 1FQ



10 legal steps the council must follow & timetable

## Legal steps

The law which states that we have to consult you about proposed transfers of council housing is set out in Section 106A and Schedule 3A of the Housing Act 1985. The City Council and the Secretary of State must have regard to the views of the City Council's secure and introductory tenants.

The City Council must give you a notice informing you of:

- Such details of the proposal as the City Council considers appropriate, including the identity of the person to whom the disposal is to be made;
- The likely consequences of the disposal for the tenant; and
- The effects of the provisions of Schedule 3A Housing Act 1985 and, in the case of secure tenants, of Sections 171A to 171H Housing Act 1985 (Preservation of Right to Buy on disposal to private sector landlords).

These details, consequences and effects are set out in this booklet.

The effects of the provisions of Schedule 3A Housing Act 1985 are:

- The City Council must first serve on you a notice (the 'Stage 1 notice') giving you the information listed above; and
- Inform you that you may make representations to the City Council by 12 noon on 2 November 2005. This booklet, the introductory letter accompanying it and the second booklet giving details of the new tenancy agreement form the Stage 1 Notice;
- Any representations made by 12 noon on 2 November 2005 must be considered by the City Council;
- Having considered those representations, the City Council must serve a further written notice on you (the 'Stage 2 notice'), informing you of any significant changes to the proposal and that you may communicate

to the Secretary of State your objection to the proposal within a period of not less than 28 days. This 28-day period begins when the City Council's Stage 2 letter is sent to tenants. The Secretary of State would take objections into account in considering any application from the City Council to transfer its stock.

## What is the indicative timetable for consultation?

### October 2005

This is the period of formal consultation with you on the proposed transfer (called Stage 1). Together with this booklet and the tenancy agreement, the process includes meetings for tenants, home visits by officers, and a short video.

### Early November 2005

The City Council considers your comments on the proposal. The City Council will decide whether the proposal needs to be amended and whether to move to a ballot of all the City Council's secure and introductory tenants in West Wythenshawe.

### Early November 2005

The City Council would send you a letter called the Stage 2 notice. This would describe what, if any, changes have been made to the original proposal, and your right to make representations to the Secretary of State.

### Throughout November 2005

A postal ballot would be conducted by Electoral Reform Ballot Services, an independent organisation that is part of the Electoral Reform Society. Every Secure and Introductory tenant would have a vote. This means that if you are joint tenants you would have separate ballot papers. Neither the City Council nor Parkway Green would know which way you have voted. If the ballot is in favour of transfer, and the Secretary of State at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister gives his consent, the transfer should take place during June 2006.



**11** other  
information  
you may want  
to look at

## Obtaining additional information

In addition to this booklet, there are a number of other papers you may want to look at in relation to the City Council's housing transfer proposal. Copies are available from your local housing office or from Alison Blow from the City Council on 0161 234 4356.

### **Quality and Choice, a Decent Home for All**

[www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm\\_housing/documents/page/odpm\\_house\\_601905.hcsp](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_housing/documents/page/odpm_house_601905.hcsp)

This is a summary of the Government's Green paper on housing.

### **Sustainable communities: building for the future**

[www.odpm.gov.uk/communities](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/communities)

This is the government's action programme for communities.

### **A charter for housing association applicants and residents**

[www.housingcorp.gov.uk/yourhome/charter.htm](http://www.housingcorp.gov.uk/yourhome/charter.htm)

This sets out what you can expect from Parkway Green as a housing association landlord.

### **The Grounds for Possession of Secure and Assured Tenants:**

This document provides the full text (as set down by Parliament) of the grounds for possession that can be used against secure tenants and the grounds that can be used against assured tenants.

### **Comparison of rights before and after transfer:**

This document sets down a more detailed comparison between the rights of tenants with the City Council and the rights tenants would have with Parkway Green, if the transfer goes ahead.



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