

**NOT ASSOCIATED WITH or APPROVED BY  
LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**LEASEHOLDER INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

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**Produced by the Estate Steering Group to inform leaseholders  
about the proposed regeneration and transfer of the**

**Mansford**

**Estate**

**to**

**Tower Hamlets**

**Community Housing**

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**This document is IMPORTANT and concerns  
the possible transfer of YOURHOME  
to TOWER HAMLETS COMMUNITY HOUSING  
in the near future**



## **Introduction**

**The Mansford Estate is made up of more than 700 homes in 28 blocks.**

**The estate is divided by Old Bethnal Green Road into two parts which we call Mansford Estate North and Mansford Estate South.**

**The Mansford Estate blocks are:**

**Adrian Boulton House**  
**359- 405 Bethnal Green Road**  
**Charles Darwin House**  
**Charles Dickens House**  
**Cobden House**  
**Elver Gardens**  
**Florida Street**  
**Grayling Square**  
**Gwilym Maries House**  
**Jeremy Bentham House**  
**John Cartwright House**  
**John Fielden House**  
**John Nettlefold House**  
**Joseph Priestley House**

**Kite Place**  
**Lampert Square**  
**Mansford Street**  
**Mullet Gardens**  
**Nelson Gardens**  
**Pollard Street**  
**Southwood Smith House**  
**St Peters Close**  
**Thomas Burt House**  
**Waring House**  
**Warner Place**  
**William Channing House**  
**William Rathbone House**  
**Zander Court**

# Unofficial ESG version of the Leaseholder Notification Document

BE CLEAR THAT OUR DOCUMENT IS UNOFFICIAL AND MAY AND DOES NOT REPRESENT THE VIEWS THE COUNCIL HAS AND/OR WISHES YOU TO SEE. IT IS CERTAINLY NOT PRESENTED IN THE WAY THE COUNCIL WISHES THE INFORMATION TO BE PRESENTED TO YOU. THE ESG BELIEVE ALL THE INFORMATION IN IT TO BE CORRECT, BUT WE PROVIDE IT FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

Your source of unbiased information is [F.I.R.S.T CALL](#). Phone them free on 0500 295 999.

## Background

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets distributed to leaseholders on the Mansford estate an official document entitled: Leaseholder Notification Document.

This purports to advise Leaseholders of the proposals to transfer the estate to THCH.

Anyone attempting to read this will have found it:

- very poorly presented
- chaotic
- ungrammatical,
- un-proofread,
- repetitious
- with sections omitted
- and references to other parts of the document which are incorrect.
- offers no opportunity for leaseholders to comment on the proposals

It is hard to read and makes little sense.

The impression of the ESG is that this document was a draft which was sent out in error. It was certainly not a document which we had signed off - we were not shown a final draft before publication, although we had been promised that this would happen.

The council's staff are varying between confirming that the wrong document was sent out, and telling us that it was the correct document, that it is the same as

similar documents which have been distributed on other estates.

Members of the ESG were extremely concerned about this document, which, from any point of view can only be understood to be incompetent.

The council then produced an alternative version which they proposed to distribute. Although this by now included the omitted material, it did not really address the issues of presentation.

We therefore agreed with LBTH that members of the ESG would prepare, at very short notice, a revised version of the document.

It appears that LBTH has rejected this document although none of the participants has been directly communicated with by a representative of LBTH.

It now seems likely that the council's revised version, which at least clarifies some issues while burying them in obfuscation, may not be distributed, either.

There is a general feeling among the ESG that, given that if the transfer goes ahead many leaseholders will be facing bills estimated by THCH to be between £8000 and £30,000 leaseholders deserve, at the very least, to be communicated with clearly, and with the same degree of quality as is devoted to tenants who, if the transfer goes ahead, stand to gain a great deal at no cost to themselves.

This document attempts to achieve those objectives.

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## Section 1: The Vision for the Mansford Estate

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) and Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH) have been working closely with residents since October 2003 on the proposals laid out in this document. These proposals are designed to regenerate the Mansford Estate ("the estate").

Together we want the estate to be a place where people choose to live, can bring up families and enjoy their retirement

– ***an estate that works for everyone.***

If **tenants** vote for this proposal the estate will transfer to THCH.

THCH proposes to channel at least £18.5 million of investment into the renovation of the estate over a four year period.

In consultation with residents on the Mansford Estate, THCH has drawn up proposals for repairs and improvements to your homes. These will not only bring all the properties up to a good state of repair, including new kitchens and bathrooms where necessary for tenants (leaseholders will not pay for works in tenants' homes), but will also improve the security and environment of the area and provide much needed play areas on the estate.

This proposal represents a unique opportunity to bring about a positive and lasting change to Mansford Estate. If the transfer goes ahead, the Council would enter into a legal agreement with THCH. THCH would be bound to keep the promises set out in this document and the Council could take legal action against them if they do not.

### The programme proposed by THCH will:-

- Ensure all residents' homes benefit from repairs and improvements to bring them up to The Decent Homes Standard and beyond.
- Improve safety and security to the estate
- Create an attractive environment for all to be proud of
- Provide a local housing management service with a local cleaning team
- Provide an effective and efficient local repairs service with a locally based handyperson
- Tackle overcrowding
- Provide improved community facilities

This proposal represents a unique opportunity to bring about this vision. If the transfer goes ahead the Council would enter into a legal agreement with THCH who would be bound to keep the promises set out in this document and the Council could take legal action against them if they do not.

# The Vision for the Mansford Estate

## Statement from the Mansford Estate Steering Group

### Dear Resident,

We the Estate Steering Group believe that these proposals give us, the residents, a once in a life-time opportunity to sort out our estate, repair blocks, improve outside areas and get to grips with security. Tenants will have their homes brought up to a decent standard with new kitchens and bathrooms. Leaseholders will see their properties properly maintained and their investment protected.

These proposals have not been imposed by the Council or dictated to us by Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH) – they are the result of many public meetings and consultations that have taken place over the last two years. The Estate Steering Group, which is made up entirely of residents – both tenants and leaseholders – has been at the heart of this.

The Estate Steering Group has explored alternatives to transferring away from the Council but none of them offer the level of investment and level of responsiveness that residents want. We believe we deserve to live in decent homes on a safe, attractive and well-managed estate. We believe that the proposals set out in this offer document are in the interest of the residents on the estate in that in the event of a transfer to THCH, we will all benefit from a new team who will manage our estate – a team who are professional, carry out repairs quickly, who think of the future not the short-term.

### Antonio Iranca

*Chair, Mansford Estate Steering Group*



*Residents on the Steering Group have developed their own website which provides more detailed information about Housing Choice.*

**See: <http://www.mansfordestate.org>**





## **Section 2: London Borough of Tower Hamlets Transfer Proposal**

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## 2.1 What is the proposal?

Tower Hamlets is consulting you about the proposal to transfer the ownership and management of its homes on the Mansford Estate to THCH.

### Background to "Housing Choice"

"Housing Choice" is the name of the comprehensive consultation programme being undertaken by the Council which will enable Council tenants and leaseholders to express a genuine choice about the future ownership and management of their homes. Housing Choice has three stages.

#### Stage 1

This stage, which was carried out on Mansford Estate between June 2001 and February 2002 culminated in a referendum on your Estate in March 2002. The referendum established that there was support by the residents for the proposition that alternative proposals for the ownership and management of the Estate be developed.

#### Stage 2

This stage entailed a steering group of residents from the Estate selecting a partner organisation from a range of social housing providers to become the potential new landlord of the Estate, subject to a ballot of tenants.

The voluntary Steering Group is made up of residents from the Mansford Estate that chose THCH as the partner landlord with which to work on plans to improve the Estate and housing service.

#### Stage 3

After having chosen THCH as its partner, the resident steering group, the Council and THCH have been working closely together to develop this transfer proposals that are now being put to residents for consideration.

#### THCH was chosen for the following reasons:

- THCH is small, a Tower Hamlets Based registered social landlord (RSL) that puts residents at the heart of the process. It has an excellent track record on estate regeneration and has delivered what it promised to residents who have already transferred from the Council in respect of refurbishment and housing management.
- THCH is accountable to the residents of the Estate they manage. Residents would have extensive input into how the organisation manages their homes and environment.
- THCH is a not for profit organisation. This means that any surplus money will be ploughed back into the Mansford Estate.

The transfer will only go ahead if a majority of the tenants on the Estate voting in the proposed secret ballot, vote in favour of transfer and the Secretary of State for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister consents to the transfer.

If the transfer proceeds, THCH would become your freehold landlord and the regeneration of the Estate detailed in Section 2 would begin. Information about THCH is set out in Section 3 of this document.

It is proposed that a ballot of tenants and test of opinion of leaseholders will take place over a period of approximately 2-3 weeks.

The Council is consulting leaseholders separately on the transfer proposals to get their views.

If the majority of tenants who vote are in favour of the transfer, it is proposed that the transfer would take place by December 2005.

If the majority of tenants who vote are not in favour of transfer then the transfer cannot go ahead and the Housing Choice programme for the estate will come to an end.

## 2.3 Effects on Leaseholders

If the transfer goes ahead the Council's responsibility and interest in the freehold of your property will be transferred to THCH. The transfer itself does not affect the nature of responsibilities set out in your lease. However, the regeneration proposals have consequences for leaseholders as your block will be refurbished.

## 2.4 Rights of leaseholders

You have *contractual* and *statutory* rights

### Contractual Rights

Your contractual rights under your lease will remain unchanged.

You will still retain:

- the right to make representations to the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal;
- the right to be consulted on any proposed works for which under the terms of your lease you are required to make a contribution towards the costs,
- and you will of course be required to pay service charges.

### Statutory Rights

Your statutory rights are subject to two changes with regards to Leasehold Enfranchisement and the extension of your Lease:

#### Right to enfranchisement ended

If your new landlord is a charitable Housing Trust (as THCH is):

- you will not be able to exercise your right to collective enfranchisement
- or to extend your lease under the Leasehold, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 (as amended).

#### THCH would allow enfranchisement under certain circumstances

THCH will *consider* allowing enfranchisement and will respond to applications for collective enfranchisement from leaseholders who would have been eligible under the above legislation but for the charitable status of THCH.

Any decision would also take into account how enfranchisement would impact on tenants living in the block affected and the impact on any works which THCH has proposed to carry out on behalf of both tenants and leaseholders.

#### Right to lease extension ended, and THCH will still allow you to extend your lease

In respect of extensions of your lease, THCH will contractually commit to allowing such extensions in the same way as defined in the afore-mentioned act, as amended from time to time

If the transfer goes ahead, the lease you have now would remain unchanged, except that THCH would become the owner of the freehold instead of the Council. You would not be issued with a new lease, but rather both you and THCH would be bound by the terms of your existing lease granted by the Council.

#### Your existing lease would continue to include:

- Details of the items included in the service charge, including how it is calculated and when it is due.
- The procedure for assigning (transferring) the lease.
- How the lease can be ended.
- Details of the respective responsibilities of the leaseholder and THCH.

#### Leaseholders will:

- keep their statutory rights to be consulted about the nature and cost of proposed works.
- They will also have the right to apply to the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal for a declaration of the 'reasonableness' of service charges. Information about this process is available from the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal.

#### THCH will

- ensure that value for money is obtained from property insurance and that you get the benefit of any bulk discount THCH receives

## 2.5 Leaseholder Test of Opinion

The Council plans to give all leaseholders on the Mansford Estate the opportunity to express their views in a separate Test of Opinion held at the same time as the tenants ballot.

For legal reasons, the leaseholders and tenants votes cannot be merged.

It is the result of the **tenants'** ballot that determines whether or not an individual transfer can proceed. For legal reasons, leaseholders cannot take part in the ballot of secure tenants.

If the transfer proceeds, THCH would become your freehold landlord and the regeneration of the Estate detailed in Section 3 would begin.

*Information about THCH is set out in Section 4 of this document.*

## 2.6 Why is the Council Proposing Transfer?

The Council knows that the Mansford Estate needs regeneration.

It estimates that it can invest a maximum of £2.28 million between now and 2009 according to its current investment programme.

Following a detailed survey in 1999 it became clear that it does not have the money necessary to do the level of work desirable, which is now estimated to be around £18.5 million

The Council has, therefore, looked at every option available to provide the level of regeneration and service that both it and the residents would want.

Over the past two years there have been specific meetings with resident groups, public meetings, fun days, drop in sessions, exhibitions, advice surgeries, and newsletters to determine what could and should be done about this situation.

Transfer to THCH is considered to be the best available solution.

THCH would be able to deliver all of the proposals, as detailed in this document.

## 2.7 Why can't the Council Invest what is needed?

The Council is a public body,

There is currently a limit on how much it is able to borrow to fund housing projects. This is because Council borrowing affects the level of the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement, which the Government controls tightly.

The Government has recently introduced change to the rules on Council borrowing, but this relaxation of the rules does not help the Council in its ability to raise the funds necessary to carry out the works of repair and improvement needed on the Estate.

## 2.8 Why Would THCH be in a Better Financial Position?

THCH would be in a better financial position because:

- It has more freedom to borrow money to pay for the works and to pay this money back over a longer period.
- Unlike the Council, THCH would be able to use all the money it receives from Preserved Right to Buy sales on providing homes and services.

## 2.9 The Key Benefits of the Transfer

The key benefits of the transfer (if it goes ahead) would be:

- A proposed major regeneration programme to Mansford Estate of £18.5 million on the estates over a 4 year period,
- An additional £4.3 million on extra works may be available, subject to sales of new homes that are planned.
- Residents would have a direct say in the management of the estate through the Bethnal Green Area Resident Board which elects a Tenant Director to the Main THCH Board and through the THCH Leaseholder Steering Group, which elects a Leaseholder Director to the Main THCH Board.
- Better value for money.
- The provision of an efficient, local, responsive service in the day-to-day management of homes, estates and community facilities.

## 2.10 What Would Happen if the Transfer Does Not Go Ahead?

If the transfer does not go ahead, you would remain with Tower Hamlets Council as your freehold Landlord.

The Council will not undertake the proposed improvement and redevelopment programme.

It would seek to address urgent health and safety repairs from its limited capital budget and to continue normal arrangements for day-to-day repairs and limited works.



## 2.11 What is the Timetable for Consultation?

A summary of the timetable is as follows:

### Formal Consultation Period

The Council will issue the formal consultation documents and begin an intensive programme of resident consultation.

This will include meetings and visiting residents in their homes.

Residents will be asked to feed back their views to the Council during this period.

### At the End of Formal Consultation

The Council and THCH will consider the views of residents and discuss how and if these should be taken into account.

### "Stage Two" Notice Period

The Council will send a letter to residents telling them of the outcome of the consultation. This letter will say:

- Whether or not the Council is going to proceed to a ballot and test of opinion
- Whether or not it is going to make any changes to the formal offer and/or Notification as a result of residents' views

It will also explain that the letter marks the start of the 28 day period for tenants/residents to lodge any objections on the offer/notification with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

### Ballot Period

If the Council has decided to continue with the process, then the postal ballot for tenants and the postal test of opinion for leaseholders will be conducted by an independent organisation called Electoral Reform Ballot Services.

**It should be noted that the leaseholder ballot is only an advisory ballot.**

### Ballot Results

The results will be announced to the Council by the Electoral Reform Ballot Services.

The Council will then inform residents.

### Transfer

Approximately six months after the close of the ballot.

If the tenants' ballot result is in favour of transfer, and the First Secretary of State gives his permission, it is expected that THCH will take over the housing at Mansford Estate.

## **Section 3: The Regeneration of the Estate**

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## 3.1 Repairs and improvements to homes

If the transfer goes ahead, a major programme of repairs will bring all homes structurally up to the Government's minimum standard which is also known as the Decent Homes Standard.

Tenant's homes will additionally benefit from internal renovations such as new kitchens and bathrooms where they are required to bring them up to the standard

In addition to these important repairs there would be a large programme of improvements.

Within 4 years of transfer, THCH intends to spend at least £18.5 million on the estate, and up to an additional £4.3 million for extra works, subject to the sales of the new homes that are planned (see section 3.5).

Residents' aspirations could change over the 4 year period so the works proposed in this section would be subject to detailed consultation and planning on a block-by-block basis with all residents as the programme continues

They may be subject to the granting of planning permission and other consents.

### Regular Maintenance Programme

THCH have budgeted for, and would provide a programme of regular maintenance that would ensure that the properties remain in their improved condition for a further 30 years. Beyond this they are unlikely to neglect their properties.

## 3.2 How have residents have been involved in the regeneration proposals?

Once THCH had been selected as the preferred partner RSL, it agreed with members of the Estate Steering Group (ESG), a schedule of meetings that would cover all of the issues that the residents were concerned about.

Four of these meetings were set aside specifically to discuss the internal works to the properties and the external refurbishment and environmental works.

These meetings of the ESG were open to all residents. Minutes of the meetings and other supporting documents can be viewed on the ESG website at [www.mansfordestate.org](http://www.mansfordestate.org).

Following this consultation THCH have consulted further with residents through individual one-to-one sessions at the show flat on the Estate in Zander Court. Each one-to-one has resulted in a questionnaire being completed. The information gathered from these events has helped to identify residents' opinions of their homes and the Estate.

## 3.3 Proposed Works

A list of essential works has been drawn up to bring the estate up to a good base standard.

Some of the works such as better security and improved block entrances and enhanced outdoor space are not structural but will add to residents' quality of life.

A description of the types of work proposed is set out below:

# **The Regeneration of the Estate**

## **STRUCTURAL REPAIRS**

- All defective concrete and brickwork areas to be repaired and cleaned where necessary
- Damp proof courses to be in good order
- Fire break installations

## **OVER CLADDING AND THERMAL IMPROVEMENT**

- External walls and any exposed flank end walls adjacent to individual dwellings to be filled with cavity wall insulation or over-clad with insulated render where possible to help the building to retain heat.

## **REPAIR/RENEW ROOF**

- The flat roofs will be renewed with improved insulation and covered with high performance felt backed by an independent insurance backed guarantee.
- “Mansafe” anchors will be provided to ensure a safe working environment for future maintenance works. The existing flues to be repaired.
- THCH will investigate with each block, the possibility of creating ‘green roofs’ or roof gardens.

## **BLOCK SECURITY ALTERATIONS**

- Defensible space railings to be installed to ground floor properties where appropriate.
- Access ways and courtyards to be remodelled to improve the layout of the estate.
- A proposal for the management of the underground car-park to cross-fund security improvements to the estate to be brought forward for consultation with the estate.

## **COMMUNAL AREA IMPROVEMENTS**

- Common areas in blocks such as halls, stairs, landings and corridors will be decorated and improved where appropriate.

## **EXTERNAL DECORATIONS**

- All properties will be decorated externally.

## **NEW KITCHENS (TENANT PROPERTIES ONLY)**

- New kitchens will have easily repairable or renewable components. All new sinks to be fitted with mixer taps. Tiled surrounds and full decoration of the room.
- New durable slip resistant floor covering
- Plumbing for washing machine, space for fridge, gas and electric cooker points and mechanical ventilation

# **The Regeneration of the Estate**

## **NEW BATHROOMS (TENANT PROPERTIES ONLY)**

- Bathrooms to have hard wearing fittings with tiled surrounds and full decoration of room.
- New durable slip resistant floor covering
- Pull cord light switch, bath and basin to be fitted with mixer taps
- Mechanical ventilation

## **NEW TOILETS (TENANT PROPERTIES ONLY)**

- New sanitary ware.
- Full decoration of room.
- New durable slip resistant floor covering

## **REPAIR/RENEW WINDOWS**

- All windows will be overhauled thoroughly and where windows are beyond repair they will be entirely replaced with double glazed units with controlled ventilation and high quality handles and catches.

## **BALCONY/WALK WAY REPAIRS**

- Private balconies and communal walkways will be repaired including refurbishment of existing balustrades, incorporating new infill panels, new handrail to private balconies and decoration.
- Asphalt areas to be re-surfaced.
- Repairs to soffits and walls prior to decoration.

## **REPAIR/RENEW ENTRANCE DOORS**

- All tenants entrance doors will be repaired or improved to make them achieve the “secure by design” standard.

## **DOOR ENTRY SYSTEM WORKS**

- New Door entry systems will be installed subject to agreement of the majority of blocks residents.

# **The Regeneration of the Estate**

## **ESSENTIAL LANDLORD SERVICES**

- Repair and improvements will be made to the following where necessary. Lighting, lightning conductors, dry risers, gas and electric mains.
- Adequate lighting to be provided for all stairs, landings and balconies
- Communal satellite/digital TV aerial improvements / installation.
- Trunking on access balconies to protect wires for phones, cable TV, lighting etc.

## **ESSENTIAL INTERNAL SERVICES**

- Electrical services will have circuit breakers, safe adequate wiring and sufficient sockets to meet modern needs. Asbestos removal, smoke stops where necessary

## **REFURBISH/RENEW LIFT**

- Existing lifts and lift motor rooms to be refurbished
- Lift cars to be have new surfaces, controls, adequate lighting and alarm systems

## **DRAINAGE WORKS**

- Drainage to be replaced or overhauled as necessary. All dDown pipes, soil and vent pipes to be renewed where defective. Water tanks, tank rooms and dry risers to be overhauled.

## **IMPROVE REFUSE DISPOSAL**

- Underground Refuse Systems to be introduced to prevent open chute chambers and loose bagged rubbish.

## **IMPROVE BLOCK ENTRANCES**

- Improved entrances to reduce anti-social behaviour, exclude intruders and enhance the appearance of the estate.
- Two stage entrances to be provided with gates to boundary railings.

## **EXTERNAL WORKS INCLUDING SECURITY WORKS, LIGHTING, LANDSCAPING,IMPROVE BLOCK ENTRANCES**

- Attractive, hard-wearing landscaping (which would maximise noise reduction and water drainage) to be provided in close consultation with residents.
- Security fences and gates to street perimeter of blocks.Improved entrances to reduce anti-social behaviour, exclude intruders and enhance the appearance of the estate.
- Two stage entrances to be provided with gates to boundary railings.



## The Regeneration of the Estate



THCH Chief Executive, Mike Tyrrell using a Household waste bin



External Decorating on THCH's Minerva Estate in Bethnal Green



THCH Leaseholder, Mr Abraham David outside the new Luke House Door Entry System in Shadwell



Scaffolding going up at Devonport Street in Shadwell to renew the windows



New secure communal garden at Hobsons Place in Spitalfields



Defensible space railings installed to ground floor properties at Morris Street in Shadwell

## The Regeneration of the Estate



New secondary door entry system gates and secure fencing at Stuttle House in Spitalfields



THCH Leaseholder, Mr Abraham David in the refurbished lobby of Luke House in Shadwell

## WORKS DESCRIPTION

South Side of Old Bethnal Green Road	Pollard Street 1-71 (odd)	Florida Street 37-53 (odd)	Waring House	William Channing House	John Cartwright House	Charles Darwin House	Thomas Burt House	John Fielden House	Joseph Priestly House	Gwilym Maries House	John Nettlefold House	Bethnal Green Rd 395a-405a (odd)	Adrian Boulton House	William Rathbone House	Southwood Smith House	Charles Dickens House	Jeremy Bentham House
Essential works to bring all properties up to a good standard showing by block the refurbishment works of at least £18.5 million proposed in the first 4 years																	
<b>STRUCTURAL WORKS</b>																	
Concrete and brickwork repairs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
External decorations and works to entrance screens	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Flat roof repair / renewal	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
Parapet repairs				√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√
Pitched roof overhaul			√								√	√					
Asphalt and balcony repairs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
<b>SERVICES &amp; COMMUNAL WORKS</b>																	
Underground drainage repairs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Overhaul/replace rainwater goods as	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

## The Regeneration of the Estate

South Side of Old Bethnal Green Road	Pollard Street 1-71 (odd)	Florida Street 37-53 (odd)	Waring House	William Channing House	John Cartwright House	Charles Darwin House	Thomas Burt House	John Fielden House	Joseph Priestly House	Gwilym Maries House	John Nettlefold House	Bethnal Green Rd 395a-405a (odd)	Adrian Boulton House	William Rathbone House	Southwood Smith House	Charles Dickens House	Jeremy Bentham House
necessary																	
Repairs and decoration to communal areas	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Overhaul water tanks	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Bin chamber refurbishment	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Overhaul door entry system	√		√								√		√			√	
Overhaul of existing lift	√															√	
Overhaul refuse chute																√	
Lightning protection	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Replace block lights as necessary	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

## WORKS DESCRIPTION

South Side of Old Bethnal Green Road	Pollard Street 1-71 (odd)	Florida Street 37-53 (odd)	Waring House	William Channing House	John Cartwright House	Charles Darwin House	Thomas Burt House	John Fielden House	Joseph Priestly House	Gwilym Maries House	John Nettlefold House	Bethnal Green Rd 395a-405a (odd)	Adrian Boulton House	William Rathbone House	Southwood Smith House	Charles Dickens House	Jeremy Bentham House
The following table identifies by block the extra works up to £4.3 million proposed subject to the sale of new homes on the estate																	
WORKS TO AREAS AROUND BLOCKS																	
Fencing repairs and decorations	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Semi-defensible space to ground floor flats		✓								✓							
Improve hard landscaping and signage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Additional roof insulation			✓									✓					
Cavity wall insulation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
CCTV installation (subject to consultation and agreement by Residents)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Replace / overhaul front entrance door	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Full replacement of electric laterals and risers	✓	✓															
New Digital Communal Aerial System	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## WORKS DESCRIPTION

North Side of Old Bethnal Green Road	Cobden House	Elver Gardens	Nelson Gardens	Mansford Street 2-54 (even)	Grayling Square	Zander Court	Mullett Gardens	Warner Place	Lampem Square	Kite Place 1-2	St Peters 1-51 (odd)
Essential works to bring all properties up to a good standard showing by block the refurbishment works of at least £18.5 million proposed in the first 4 years											
STRUCTURAL WORKS											
Concrete and brickwork repairs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
External decorations and works to entrance screens	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Flat roof repair / renewal	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Parapet repairs		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Asphalt and balcony repairs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
SERVICES & COMMUNAL WORKS											
Drainage repairs	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Overhaul / replace rainwater goods as necessary	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Repairs and decoration to communal areas	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Overhaul water tanks	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Bin chamber refurbishment	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Lightning protection	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√



## WORKS DESCRIPTION

North Side of Old Bethnal Green Road	Cobden House	Elver Gardens	Nelson Gardens	Mansford Street 2-54 (even)	Grayling Square	Zander Court	Mullett Gardens	Warner Place	Lampem Square	Kite Place 1-2	St Peters 1-51 (odd)
Replace block lights as necessary	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Overhaul door entry system	√										
Overhaul of existing lift	√										

## WORKS DESCRIPTION

North Side of Old Bethnal Green Road	Cobden House	Elver Gardens	Nelson Gardens	Mansford Street 2-54 (even)	Grayling Square	Zander Court	Mullett Gardens	Warner Place	Lampem Square	Kite Place 1-2	St Peters 1-51 (odd)
The following table identifies by block the extra works up to £4.3 million proposed subject to the sale of new homes on the estate											
WORKS TO AREAS AROUND BLOCKS											
Fencing repairs and decorations	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Semi-defensible space to ground floor flats		√									
Improve hard landscaping and signage	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
CCTV installation(subject to consultation and agreement by Residents)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Replace / overhaul front entrance door	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Full replacement of electric laterals and risers	√										
Cavity wall insulation	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
New Digital Communal Aerial System	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

## 3.4 Minimising inconvenience to residents during the works programme

THCH is committed to keeping to a minimum any inconvenience caused by the works to the Estate.

The aim is to:

- Produce a practical building programme in consultation with residents, covering what works are to be done and when.
- Take into account health and safety considerations.

Most improvement works would be carried out while you continue to live in your home. To minimise inconvenience, THCH officers would visit each resident to make sure their individual circumstances are taken into account before refurbishment starts.

The builders will work to strict standards when they are in your home. They will be instructed to look after your belongings (making sure they are not damaged) and to ensure that water and electricity supplies are only turned off if absolutely necessary and for the minimum of time. All tradesmen would wear identity badges.

Quiet rooms or flats would be made available nearby for use by residents during the day.

A resident liaison officer, who would be sensitive to the cultural needs of the communities on the estate, would be employed to deal swiftly with any queries or concerns regarding the works.

Measures would also be put into place to ensure the safety of residents and workers throughout the build programme.

## 3.5 New Homes For Sale, Shared Ownership or Rent

### Why new homes are being proposed

The “new build” proposals outlined in this document were drawn up through direct consultation with residents, with the Estate Steering Group and a local group of architects. The residents wanted to look at ways of sympathetically mixing a small amount of new homes in amongst the existing homes with minimum disturbance and maximum gain. A proportion of the of the new homes would be for rent and shared ownership in accordance with the Council’s Affordable Housing Policy.

### How will the “new homes” benefit me?

Building new homes will fund major improvements to the Estate that will not be covered by money raised from rents or leaseholder charges. The sale of new homes will raise up to £4.3 million. This money will be ring-fenced for funding:

- improvements to outdoor space including hard-landscaping and extensive new planting.
- an overhaul of lighting and security
- installation of digital TV aerials

Residents will have the final say over what is built. The new build will be subject to further resident consultation and would require planning approval.



### Will it disrupt me?

THCH will carefully plan any new build projects to minimise disruption to existing residents. They will work towards completing new homes as quickly as possible. For example, two new four bedroom houses would take approximately 10 months to complete from start to finish. Work will start no earlier than 8am and end at 5pm, between Monday to Friday.

### Proposed site 1: Rushmead

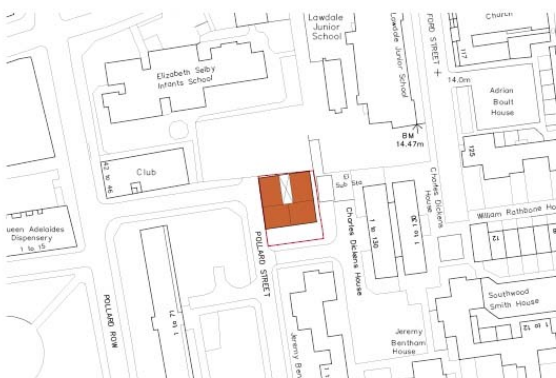
This site currently contains a LBTH local housing office and garages. The housing office will be closing down in the next few years.

The proposal is to provide two storeys of commercial space on the corner of Florida Street and Rushmead Street (where the housing office now is). Above this space, we propose building seven storeys of residential accommodation. Each floor would have 4 x 2 bedroom flats.

In addition to this, we propose building a terrace of 9 x 3 storey, 4 bedroom houses with private rear gardens along Florida Street.

### Proposed site 2: Pollard Street Garages

There are currently 12 garages with an entrance off Pollard Street. These garages attract anti-social behaviour and this, combined with the state of the refuse collection point, creates an unsafe and unattractive area. The proposal is to provide a 4 storey block with 4 x 2 bedroom flats per



# The Regeneration of the Estate

floor. This scheme, together with fencing off the area around Charles Dickens House and improving security & landscaping, would have an extremely positive impact on this part of Mansford Estate and make tenants and leaseholders proud to live there.

## Proposed site 3: Wear Place

The proposed site is the car access off Canrobert Street between John Fielden House and Joseph Priestley House. The proposal is to block the Canrobert Street entrance with 2 x 3 storey, 4 bedroom houses with private rear gardens.

## Proposed site 4: Blythe Street

At the end of Blythe Street there is a car parking area. In the past this area has been a popular place to dump stolen cars. The area appears unpopular for parking. The proposal is to build 4 x 3 storey, 4 bedroom houses facing north, with private rear gardens. The new houses will be designed to fit in well with the existing maisonettes and with them, create an intimate courtyard.

There is also the possibility of increasing security by closing off the cut through between Blythe Street and the parking space by Adrian Boulton House. As with all these proposals, this would only be implemented following close consultation with residents.

## Proposed site 5: Corner of Mansford Street and Old Bethnal Green Road

Approximately two thirds of this site is taken up with tarmac, although it is popular with young people who play a range of games including football, tennis and baseball. The remainder of the site is grassed but unfortunately this is unusable because it is heavily fouled by dogs. The area next to Cobden House contains the remains of brick walls and a children's slide which seems more popular with smoking teenagers than



young children. The area is badly lit and has not been maintained.

The proposal is to put a fifteen storey tower on the site with no more than five units (2 x 2 bedrooms and 3 x 1 bedroom) per floor. The ground floor would be reserved for community use, so the building would potentially provide a total of 75 new homes. The building would be set away from Cobden House and close to Old Bethnal Green Road and would neither overlook nor take away light from Cobden House. The building would in fact take up less than a third of the site.

## 3.6 What happens if THCH do not get planning permission for the new homes?

The new build proposals, and drawings used in this document are indicative as they are dependent on obtaining planning permission and any other necessary consents and to comply with any necessary legal requirements. Further consultation with residents would take place on these new build proposals, the final works programme and in relation to other details of the proposals, such as finishes and materials used. However, THCH is committed to spending at least £18.5million on major works even if no approval for new homes was forthcoming. The tables above indicate the works that are included in the £18.5million and the extra works that would be subject to the sale of the proposed new homes.

## 3.7 Consultation before Refurbishment and Improvements

Before any work is started, you have the right to be consulted under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. In addition, leaseholders have a number of rights, which have been improved, by the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002. Section 151 of this Act replaces Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 in respect of consultation procedures for works. You will get details of what is planned, including estimates. You will be invited to comment on them within a specified time.

You will be required, within the terms of your lease, to make a contribution towards the cost of the works of refurbishment and improvement that will have been undertaken to blocks and the estate



## 3.8 Leaseholders' contribution towards the costs of Refurbishment and Improvements

Leaseholders will have to pay contributions towards the cost of the proposed renovations and regeneration. These are technically known as *recharges*.

**For some leaseholders these may be very large.**

**THCH has estimated rough figures, based on its past experience of regenerating estates, for the rechargeable costs which may be involved.**

**For the essential repairs detailed previously, they range from £8,000 to £30,000. Most blocks are in the £20-30,000 range.**

**THESE FIGURES ARE ROUGH ESTIMATES ONLY, and not based on detailed surveying works which would have to be carried out after transfer and before finalisation of works to be done, nor are they based on tenders for the work.**

Your lease states to what extent you may have to pay towards the cost of repairs and improvements to your block and the estate.

*To obtain a more detailed estimate relating to your block, contact Peter Exton at Tower Hamlets Community Housing.*

## THCH's Commitment to Leaseholders

THCH is committed to working with all leaseholders on the Mansford Estate to ensure that a full range of affordable options for payment are available .

A number of options will be developed to help leaseholders meet their share of the major works costs.

These options will include payment by instalment, low interest loans and deferred payment via a charge on the property.

Where leaseholders could be in financial difficulties as a result of the rechargeable costs of the improvement programme set out in this document, consultations will take place with every individual leaseholder on the options available to them.

## Ways in which your contributions might be reduced

There are complicated legal limitations as to the extent to which leaseholders would be charged.

THCH has to work within the formal Common Policy Framework drawn up by the Council to protect those leaseholders in most financial hardship from having to pay high contributions towards the refurbishment of their block.

In turn, this Policy Framework meets the requirements of the Governments "Social Landlords Discretionary Reduction of Service Charges (England) Directions 1997", which unless the Government specifically directs otherwise, controls how any social landlord can reduce charges made to leaseholders for work undertaken to their homes.

**The contribution you would be required to make *may* vary depending on your personal circumstances:**

- When the property was purchased
- The information given at the time of purchase
- when the works are done
- The terms of your lease
- Whether you are the original right-to-buy purchaser

**and also depending on the nature of the works that are carried out:**

- Within the policy there are types of works which will be recharged to leaseholders and types which cannot be recharged.

## Conditions under which your contribution may be limited according to your personal circumstances

Where rechargeable repairs and improvements cost more than £10,000 per property, leaseholders may have costs restricted to this amount if all of the following criteria are met: -.

- You are the original Right to Buy purchaser.
- The property is your only or principal home and you live there full time.
- You do not have any un[disputed] service charge arrears with THCH. (in other words, you have no service charge arrears which are not at the time subject to the formal structures for challenging service charges which are available to you)
- The works were not specified on your Section 125 Offer Notice, which you received before you bought your home, and the time limit on your section 125 has not expired.
- You are in receipt of a state pension or means tested state benefit or are able to demonstrate exceptional financial hardship.

If you sell your property within seven years of your recharge being limited to £10,000, THCH will recover the difference between the £10,000 and the full recharge by placing a legal charge on your home. The difference in cost is recovered from the sale price you receive.

## Works which are chargeable and non-chargeable for all leaseholders

### Rechargeable works:

These are works required to maintain the fabric of the building or its immediate environment in good condition.

They are generally

- works which replace building or other components on a 'like for like' basis or with an accepted modern version of the original.
- works which, improve the structure, fabric or amenity of a building or its immediate environment and/or
- which serve to increase the life of the building over and above that likely to be achieved through normal repair.

### Non-rechargeable works:

These are works carried out to enhance the general environment, remodelling of the estate and/or to eliminate crime or anti-social behaviour. These may include exceptional works that require detailed consideration because they are more extensive than those required to maintain the building.

- Additional block / Estate Lighting
  - Car Park Repairs
  - Community Building Repairs
  - Creation of new entrance lobbies / canopies
  - Enlarging Chute Chambers
  - Enlarging Chutes
  - Entrance Re-Orientation
  - Garage Repairs, except where part of the lease.
  - Internal works to tenanted homes e.g. new kitchens / bathrooms / WC's
  - Lift Enlargement
  - Local Housing Office/depot provision/repairs
  - New Block and Estate CCTV provision
  - New Build infills
  - New Concierge Station Provision
  - New installation of Boundary Walls/Fences
  - New lift installations
  - New signage
  - New stair tower installations
  - Provision of new Community Buildings
  - Secondary Entryphone System Provision
  - Underground Refuse System provision
- They also include works to:

- management offices or depots,
- tenants flats and
- community buildings that do not fall within the specific recharge scope of individual leases.

**You would not have to pay towards the cost of the internal renovation of tenants' homes.**

## **Ways to pay your contribution towards the costs of works to your home**

- Pay the full amount
- Loan from THCH paid off by instalments over a limited period
- Bank or Building Society loan
- Bank or Building Society Mortgage
- Houseproud Loan and Grant (via the Council)
- Private Sector Minor Works Grants. (via the Council)
- A loan from the Housing Corporation
- Legal charge placed on the property

THCH is committed to providing support to all leaseholders facing hardship, particularly elderly and vulnerable residents

## **Section 4: About Your Proposed New Landlord, Tower Hamlets Community Housing**

### **WHAT IS IN THIS SECTION OF THE DOCUMENT?**

<b>4.1 Who are Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH)?</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>4.2 Who governs Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH)?</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>4.3 Who regulates Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH)?</b>	<b>42</b>

### 4.1 Who are Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH)?

Tower Hamlets Community Housing Limited (THCH) is a not-for-profit, Registered Social Landlord (Housing Association) and a Registered Charity.

Housing Associations are independent not-for-profit organisations that provide homes for people in housing need. Housing Associations are the country's major provider of affordable new homes for rent. THCH already provides high quality homes and housing services to the people who live on THCH Estates in Shadwell & Wapping, Bethnal Green and Spitalfields.

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets set up THCH in 1999 in partnership with local residents and the wider community in general, in order to transfer 1552 Council homes to its ownership in March 2000.

For more information on THCH's performance see - [www.housingcorp-online.org](http://www.housingcorp-online.org)

The name Tower Hamlets Community Housing was carefully chosen. The name incorporates Tower Hamlets in order to emphasise THCH's links with Tower Hamlets. It also incorporates the word "community" to emphasise the importance THCH places on its links with the community. To underline this commitment, one third of THCH's 18 Board Members are residents (five tenants, one leaseholder) and the current Chair is a tenant. A further third of the THCH Board are Tower Hamlets Council Nominees. The final third are independent members. The policies of THCH with regard to rents and tenant rights are very similar to those of the Council in order to protect tenants who have already transferred and new tenants in future.

THCH is responsive to residents and will enable you to make decisions at a local level about what services will be provided to Mansford Estate and how these services will be provided Estate.

THCH aims eventually to increase the number of homes it owns and manages to around 5,000, all in Tower Hamlets, through a mixture of stock transfer and new build. They believe this to be the optimum size for delivering an efficient service while maintaining close links with the local community.

THCH is a not-for-profit organisation which means that all of its income is spent on housing and community services, providing new homes and repaying loans.

There would be no question of any "profits" being shared out between members of THCH. All surpluses are recycled back into the association and every penny has to be properly accounted for.

Very strict rules apply to registered social landlords. For example:

THCH can only do certain things, as set out in its rules, such as provide quality homes at affordable rents;

THCH must comply with the Housing Corporation's Regulatory Code and Guidance which sets out the expectations of Registered Social Landlords. These expectations are designed to make sure that the RSL is viable, properly managed and properly governed. The Housing Corporation assesses compliance with the Regulatory Code and Guidance and if compliance is not achieved it has very wide powers to intervene;

THCH's constitution prohibits payment of anything other than out-of-pocket expenses actually incurred in carrying out THCH's business, to Main Board members and any change would require the Housing Corporation's consent.

## 4.2 Who governs Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH)?

THCH is governed by a Board of Management, which sets out its rules and monitors its performance.

The duties of the Main Board are to ensure that the organisation remains viable and well run. It oversees and guides the work of the staff teams and meets regularly with staff to receive and comment on reports and to agree future developments and strategy.

There are 18 places on the Main Board, including 6 for residents (tenants and leaseholders). Mansford Estate residents would be eligible to stand for the resident places on the Board if the transfer goes ahead. Board members are selected on the basis of their expertise, experience and suitability to do the job. The Main Board Members are not paid, but are reimbursed for the expenses of attending meetings, for example travelling or child-minding costs.

### Main Board

The board of THCH has significant resident representation. The board has places for:

- Resident Members (five tenants, one leaseholder)
- Independent Members
- LBTH Council Members

Residents are involved both as full THCH Board members and through involvement in the local Area Resident Boards. THCH sees resident involvement as fundamental to providing quality services to local people that meet their needs and aspirations.

The Independent Members of the Main Board consist of suitably qualified and experienced volunteers. The Independent Members have a range of skills and experience which contribute to the governance of the organisation and which complement the other Main Board Members.

The 6 councillor members are nominated by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

### The Residents are:

Anne Ambrose of Achilles House –  
Representing the Bethnal Green Area  
Resident Board

Don Beal of Beechwood House –  
Representing the Leaseholder Steering  
Group

Mosabbir Ali of Vollasky House –  
Representing the Spitalfields Area Resident  
Board

Alan Stern of Java Court – Representing the  
Shadwell & Wapping Area Resident Board

Vacancy – Representing the Bethnal Green  
Area Resident Board

Vacancy – Representing the Shadwell &  
Wapping Area Resident Board

### The Independents are:

Ken Beech – Director of Corporate Banking  
with Bank of Scotland

John Lau – Coordinator with the Strategic  
Health Authority

Jackie Odunoye – Former Chief Executive of  
Tower Hamlets HAT

Roger Booth – Chartered Surveyor

Claire Fry – Housing Manager with Kelsey  
Housing Association

Vacancy

### The Council Representatives are:

Cllr Manir Uddin Ahmed of Shadwell Ward

Cllr Richard Brooks of St Katharine's &  
Wapping Ward

Cllr Sirajul Islam of Bethnal Green South  
Ward

Cllr Akikor Rahman of Bethnal Green South  
Ward

Cllr James Sanderson of Bethnal Green  
North Ward



Vacancy

### **Resident Members:**

#### *Anne Ambrose*

Anne has lived on the Minerva Estate in the Bethnal Green Area all of her life. She has seen many changes in the way the estate and area has been managed and more recently how the condition of the estate had deteriorated, prior to its transfer to THCH. Anne has spent many years as a community representative and in 1985, set up a Tenants and Residents Association. Since then a great deal of her own time has been spent representing residents' views on various proposals for the estate. She regularly attends the local LAP meeting and Police Sector Forums. Anne is also the Chair of Governors of a local junior school. Anne is a civil servant working for the Home Office, and brings her supervisory and management skills, and knowledge of IT to the Main Board.

#### *Mosabbir Ali*

Mosabbir Ali is a resident in the Spitalfields Area and through his interest in helping other residents, he chairs the Spitalfields Area Resident Board. He has been a resident of his current block since 1984 and has been a member of the THCH Main Board since 2002.

#### *Don Beal BSc, MSc, PhD, AFIMA, MBCS, C. Eng*

Don Beal is a Research Fellow at Queen Mary & Westfield College and a leaseholder, living on the Dinmont Estate in the Bethnal Green Area. He is an active member of his local residents' association and has been involved in the consultation on the THCH proposal from the beginning. He is pleased to be able to represent leaseholders and to examine how THCH plans to meet its promises and commitments over the next thirty years for the benefit of all residents. He has therefore taken a keen interest in the detail of the THCH business plan.

#### *Alan Stern*

Alan Stern is a resident in the Shadwell and Wapping Area using his commercial experience of dealing with a variety of ethnic backgrounds to take an interest in the well-being of local residents regardless of different landlords. This has often brought him into contact with THCH and the Borough in his efforts to solve individuals' problems. Alan wishes to see the improved environment that THCH has created developed to see a return of community pride.

### **Independent Members:**

#### *Ken Beech, ACIB MCT*

Ken Beech is a Director of Corporate Banking with Bank of Scotland. He was previously a Senior Account Manager with the Social Housing finance teams of Bank of Scotland and Halifax plc. Ken is professionally qualified in banking and corporate treasury and has a wealth of corporate and structured finance experience. He is the Chair of the Finance Committee for his local parish council and sits on a regional grant committee for the HBOS Foundation, a charitable trust funded by his employer HBOS plc.

#### *John Lau BA, BSc (Econ) MCIH*

John has worked in the Local Authority and Housing Association field for over 20 years. John started his career with Lewisham Council. He then worked as an Estate Manager for Tower Hamlets, before working in a number of councils in London. He joined the Peabody Trust (a registered social landlord) in 1992, as an Area Manager, where he was responsible for the management of the Trust properties in North and East London. John joined the Network Housing Group in 2001, as Divisional Manager for London Strategic Housing, where he has been responsible for the development of accommodation for keyworkers. John has recently joined the

## About Tower Hamlets Community Housing

Strategic Health Authority as the Housing Co-ordinator.

John is also a Committee member for Greenwich Housing Society and a member of the Government for London's Affordable Housing Group, and has been a School Governor.

John has been a board member of THCH since 1999, where he currently chairs the Service Delivery Committee. John is keen to contribute his knowledge and expertise in areas of Housing management, Housing Law, Regeneration, Neighbourhood Renewal and Local Strategic Partnering to help THCH build Sustainable Communities and promote excellence in services to residents.

### *Jackie Odunoye BSc (Econ), CIPFA*

Jackie Odunoye was Chief Executive of the Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust in Bow and previously had seventeen years Local Government experience within Finance, Accountancy and Technical Services. She is also a school governor in Tower Hamlets, a board member at Leaside Regeneration Ltd and Leaside Business Centre, a Trustee of Action for Bow. Jackie is a qualified accountant and has specialised in housing finance and computer development on rent accounting and other financial packages. The particular experience she brings compliments that of other directors on the board and helps to ensure the success of THCH.

### *Roger Booth MRICS MCIOB MCMI, Independent Director*

Roger Booth has lived in Tower Hamlets since 1977. He is a member of three professional institutions, including the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. Roger has a wealth of experience in social housing and education projects and is a partner in a Consultancy specialising in this area. He is the Treasurer of Care for St Anne's, a charity which aims to raise funds for the restoration of the historic St Anne's Church, in Limehouse.

### *Claire Fry BA (Hons), Independent Director*

Claire Fry is a Housing Manager with Kelsey Housing Association, based in South London, which covers homes all over the South East of England from Southampton in the South to Cambridgeshire in East Anglia. Claire has worked in housing for over 20 years and brings a wealth of associated knowledge to the Board of THCH. Claire is a Practitioner Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

### **Councillors:**

#### *Cllr Manir Uddin Ahmed*

Manir Uddin Ahmed is a local resident and the councillor representing the Shadwell area of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. He is an active member of the Labour Party, a school governor, the Tarling Estate TRA and a former Chair of the Shadwell Board of the SRB 5 programme, Connecting Communities. He was the Mayor of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets from May 2004 – May 2005.

#### *Cllr Richard Brooks*

Richard Brooks is a local resident of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and councillor representing the St Katharine's and Wapping Ward. He is currently the Research Director at Fabian Society, where he oversees projects on public policy and politics and was previously Research Fellow in Economics at the Institute for Public Policy Research. He chairs the steering group of the Shadwell Safer Neighbourhoods Team and is a local authority representative on the Police Consultative Committee. Since May 2003, he has served in the Cabinet at the London Borough of Tower Hamlets as lead Member for Resources, where his responsibilities include the budget, pensions and accounts, council buildings and other assets and e-services. Richard chairs the THCH Personnel Committee.

### *Cllr Sirajul Islam*

Sirajul Islam is a local tenant and is one of the three councillors for the Bethnal Green South area of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. He has served as a cabinet member for the Council as lead member for Social Services. He is currently working for the Barts and the London NHS Trust's Communications Department and is also an active member of the Bengali Educational Society, Baitul Aman Mosque and Cultural Centre Ltd, John Scurr School as a school governor and Management Committee member of Tower Project and Chair of Cityside Partnership Board. In addition he is also an Associate Non-Executive Director of Tower Hamlets PCT.

### *Cllr Akikur Rahman*

Akikur Rahman is a local tenant and is one of the three Councillors representing the Bethnal Green South area of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Akikur is currently employed as a Security Supervisor for the Shield Security Services Company Limited. He previously served on the Council as a councillor for the Holy Trinity Ward from 1990-1994.

### *Cllr James Richard Sanderson*

James Sanderson is a local LBTH resident, and one of the three Councillors representing the Bethnal Green North Area of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. James is currently working in the Bishopsgate area of Central London as a Chartered Accountant and is also a trustee of Cans Limited which is located in Islington, North London.

## 4.3 Who regulates Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH)?

THCH is a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee that is registered with the Housing Corporation. This is the government agency responsible for supervising and regulating Registered Social Landlords. These include regulations relating to:

- provision of information, consultation, participation, confidentiality of information, complaints and compensation;
- service charges and standards of services;
- leasehold and general housing management policies;
- financial management; and
- the way in which the organisation operates in terms of competence, independence, openness and equality and diversity.

THCH produces an annual report to residents, which includes details of their annual accounts and performance.

In addition, THCH, just like the Council, is subject to regular inspection by the Housing Inspectorate, an arm of the Audit Commission, to assess, amongst other things, the quality and the cost effectiveness of the services provided.

## About Tower Hamlets Community Housing

### Statement from Anne Ambrose, Chair of Tower Hamlets Community Housing



THCH was chosen by the Mansford Estate Steering Group in the summer of 2004.

Tower Hamlets Community Housing operates exclusively in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and as at July 2005, THCH owns just over 1,900 homes; these include:

- 1283 tenanted properties
- 569 leasehold properties
- 19 shared ownership units
- 2 commercial properties
- 42 properties managed by Spitalfields H.A.

We have 3 area offices, employ 56 staff, and are financially strong. We have a significant development programme which is expected to generate some 74 new properties a year. THCH's approach from the start has been to put residents in control of the process of developing proposals for the regeneration of our Estates and the setting up of local housing services.

We believe that only by doing it in this way will the proposals genuinely reflect your needs and priorities.

THCH Officers have been working with residents through your Estate Steering Group since May 2004 and in that time have carried out very extensive consultation. We are grateful to all who have kindly given up their time to help shape the ideas and plans which are set out in this offer document.

During the consultation you told us many things about the estate and your homes. What you liked or disliked; what the key problems are; how you would like the estate improved and made safer; and how you would like to benefit from THCH's local housing service.

The proposals set out in this offer document reflect what you have told us you want to see happen.

The Council has made it clear that it has very limited resources to invest in your homes and what money is available has got to be spread thinly across all the Council's housing stock. The Council is realistic about how much it can afford and has said it has very little chance of getting any more money to tackle the massive backlog of disrepair to its homes.

That is why the estate is now being given the chance to vote for more resources and a better future.

In this offer document we have set out our proposals to invest at least £18.5 million on the estates over a 4 year period, with an additional £4.3 million on extra works, subject to the sales of the new homes that are planned.

The choice for the future for your estate is in your hands.

**Anne Ambrose**

*A THCH TENANT IN BETHNAL GREEN AND  
CHAIR OF THE THCH BOARD*



## **Section 5: How your homes would be managed**

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## 5.1 Local Community Housing Office and Staff Structure

If the transfer ballot is successful Mansford Estate properties will initially be managed through THCH's local Community Housing Office, which is situated close by on the Minerva Estate.

Should THCH be successful in other Housing Choice stock transfers in the Bethnal Green area, they will establish a second Local Housing Office on the Mansford Estate.

The Community Housing Office will have the following staff:

- Community Housing Office Manager
- Senior Community Housing Officer
- Community Housing Officers
- Housing Support Officer
- Housing Support Assistant
- Handyperson
- Estate Cleaning Supervisor
- Estate Cleaners

## 5.2 Estate Wardens

In addition to the above, THCH proposes to widen its warden service to Mansford Estate subject to further resident consultation. There would then be regular estate patrols by uniformed officers aimed at improving security and reducing anti-social behaviour on the estate.

Like other services, such as cleaning and concierge, the wardens would be paid for through service charges paid by both leaseholders and tenants.

## 5.3 Local management of the Estate

The THCH office that would manage Mansford Estate would provide the following services:

- day-to-day repairs and maintenance
- cleaning and caretaking
- tenancy management
- leasehold management
- tackling anti-social behaviour and harassment
- service charge arrears
- rent arrears
- lettings and transfer requests

THCH would:

- work closely with all residents to develop and improve the delivery of day-to-day housing services
- involve you in decisions about the improvement programmes for the estate
- provide effective customer care training and standards for all staff
- have named officers responsible for service delivery for your estate
- have a policy of openness and responsiveness to residents
- ensure that services are sensitive to the needs of all sections of the community
- provide residents with information about the local housing service on a regular basis, including feedback from residents and satisfaction surveys



### 5.4 The housing management service

THCH would provide a full range of financial and corporate services to support the local Community Housing Office, including rent accounting and service charges.

### 5.4 Out of hours emergency repairs

THCH publicises its arrangements for dealing with out of hours emergency repairs in its monthly newsletter "Update". This service is monitored, to ensure that THCH residents receive a quality out of hours service.

### 5.6 Code of conduct and quality monitoring for repair persons and contractors

All staff involved in the delivery of the repairs service, both THCH officers and contractors used by THCH, are expected at all times to treat residents with courtesy and respect; to ensure that no damage is caused to residents' belongings in the course of carrying out work; and to leave properties clean and tidy following the completion of work.

All contractors are expected to abide by a Code of Conduct, drawn up by THCH, which addresses these issues.

### 5.7 Cleaning

THCH recognises that the care and maintenance of a block by a local cleaner can make a dramatic difference to its appearance. The cleaning staff would be fully supported through the use of proper cleaning equipment and training. Staff would also benefit from local, 'on the spot' management.

The cleaning service at THCH includes the following:

### Open and Transparent Service

A publicised cleaning programme for the estate would be agreed with residents, setting out what cleaning tasks take place on what days. A clear record of the completion of the cleaning tasks would be kept for inspection by residents.

### Cleaning Method Statements

The ways in which the cleaning tasks are undertaken are as important as how frequently they are carried out. The method of carrying out key tasks would be agreed with residents and publicised. All cleaners would receive training and guidance on the various method statements on an ongoing basis.

### Full Resident Involvement

Residents will be involved in monitoring the service via joint inspections with the local Community Housing Office. The findings of the residents will be reported to the Area Resident Board on a regular basis.

### Locally Managed Service

The Local Community Housing Office will manage the service and be responsible for resolving any problems. Residents will therefore be able to find out more about the service and, where necessary, make a complaint at the local Community Housing Office.

### Weekend Service

It is recognised that many residents are keen to have a good cleaning service over the weekend period and the cleaning programme allows for Saturday working, without detriment to the weekday service.

## 5.8 Measures to combat anti-social behaviour

### Statement of Intent

THCH recognises that anti-social behaviour has a negative impact on people and neighbourhoods. It is committed to ensuring that all residents enjoy their right to peace, quiet and security in their homes. THCH would take firm and prompt action to deal with disruptive residents and any other persons causing a nuisance or harassment on the estate or in individual dwellings.

### Appropriate Action

THCH would take whatever action is available to it in tackling anti-social behaviour. This includes arbitration and mediation, the use of injunctions, and the use of THCH's powers under the Housing Act 1996 and The Anti-social behaviour Act 2003.

If the anti-social behaviour is persistent or acute and the perpetrator is a tenant of THCH they could take any or all of the following steps:

- ask the tenant to sign an acceptable behaviour contract (ABC)

- serve notice that they would seek possession and, if this does not act as a deterrent, go to court to seek a possession order

- seek an injunction to enforce the terms of the tenancy agreement

- use of demoted tenancies

- seek an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO), either directly or via the police or local authority

- share information enabling the police to take criminal action

- share information enabling the local authority to take action under the Crime and Disorder Act

- share information enabling the local authority environmental health team to take action against statutory nuisances e.g. noise

- use arbitration or mediation services

Where the perpetrator of anti-social behaviour is unidentified, THCH would take a pro-active approach to identify them including the use of covert surveillance and professional witnesses as well as THCH staff including caretakers and wardens as appropriate.

### Inter-Agency Approach

THCH works with local statutory and voluntary agencies, including the police, probation service, health authority, environmental health and social services, to develop a co-ordinated approach to problems of neighbour nuisance on its Estates.

### Leaseholders and Sub-Tenants

Where a lessee or sub-tenant of the leaseholder perpetrates nuisance, THCH will use its powers under the lease to take action against the lessee or sub-tenant. This would broadly follow the same stages as relate to tenants, and ultimately include the use of injunctions and action for forfeiture.

### 5.9 Anti-Harassment Policy

THCH believes in equality, and is committed to ensuring that its residents are able to live without fear of harassment, intimidation or attack. THCH is opposed to all forms of harassment, and would use its powers and resources to take action against any individual involved in an incident, where either the victim or the perpetrator is a resident of THCH.

THCH is committed to combating all forms of harassment including:-

- racial harassment
- sexual harassment
- harassment against people living with HIV or AIDS
- harassment of gay and lesbian residents
- harassment on grounds of age , disability and religious belief

### Work In Partnership with the Community

THCH's strategy would be to work in partnership with the Local Authority, local community groups, voluntary agencies and the police to develop initiatives to combat all forms of harassment. It would adopt practices which will contribute towards the development of harmonious communities in the Borough.

### Victim Centered Approach

THCH would take a victim-centred approach in responding to cases of harassment. It would be guided by the victim in determining the most appropriate course of action in responding to an incident of harassment.

### 5.10 Complaints Policy

- THCH is committed to providing a high quality efficient and effective service to all its residents and applicants for housing and recognises that sometimes people may be dissatisfied with its services or mistakes might be made in service delivery.
- THCH is keen to obtain feedback from service users to inform reviews of the services it provides and the way in which it provides them.
- THCH operates clear and well-publicised procedures for receiving and dealing with complaints which will be dealt with within stated timescales.
- THCH ensures that all staff likely to be involved in handling complaints have had relevant training and are familiar with the complaints procedure to ensure that all complaints are dealt with promptly, courteously, consistently and fairly with due regard to confidentiality.
- All complaints received would be monitored, and details recorded of the date received, the nature of the complaint, the date action was taken and the nature of the action taken. THCH's Director of Housing and its Service Delivery Committee regularly review complaints received and consider appropriate action to tackle problems that are persistently raised, reporting their findings to the Board.

## 5.11 Residents' Involvement

As a resident-led organisation THCH is committed to local decision making, control and service delivery.

THCH believes residents should be empowered to have a full say in how their homes and communities are managed and communities supported. Effective participation provides residents with an opportunity to voice their concerns and express their views in order to positively shape the organisation's vision and services. The Leaseholders Steering Group nominates a director to the Main Board. THCH tenants can have direct involvement in the management of their homes through the Area Residents Boards, who nominate representatives to the Joint Area Residents Board (JARB), and also nominate resident directors to the Main THCH Board.

THCH would facilitate and enable residents to express their concerns and aspirations individually and collectively.

THCH would ensure that all residents have the opportunity to participate in the decision making process at all levels within the organisation. THCH would encourage residents to participate. THCH would proactively seek to maximise representation and involvement from the widest cross-section of residents. However, THCH recognises that not all residents will want a high level of involvement.

## 5.12 Consultation

THCH will fully consult with all residents on matters of interest or concern to them including planned maintenance and major works, proposed changes in housing management and service delivery.

THCH consults residents widely on a variety of issues including proposed changes in policy and practice, service delivery performance, housing management and major works. Consultation is carried out both through the three local Area Resident Boards, including one for the Bethnal Green Area and the Leaseholder Steering Group, and with individual residents as appropriate.

All residents are fully consulted on such proposals at the earliest opportunity. They would be given a full and clear explanation of the proposals and their implications, and adequate time to consider the proposals. The methods may include:

- Block meetings
- Special interest group meetings
- One to one interviews/discussions
- Drop in sessions
- Open days
- Fun days
- Newsletters
- 'Planning for Real'
- Focus groups
- Individual letters
- Surveys and questionnaires

THCH monitors the results of consultation methods, to ensure that views from all sections of the community are considered when making changes and improvements.

It welcomes feedback and gives individual residents a range of different ways to register their views and influence policy so

## How Your Homes Would Be Managed

as to enable continuous review and improvement of service delivery.

These methods include:

- Comprehensive residents' satisfaction surveys carried out on an ongoing basis.
- Monitoring of residents' satisfaction with our maintenance contractors and handy person.
- Regular newsletters to be used as a medium for encouraging feedback.
- Telephone and postal surveys or consultation will be carried out on a regular basis.
- Effective Monitoring of all complaints received to ensure any trends are noted and improvements in service delivery made.

### 5.13 What would be the role of the Council following transfer?

If the transfer goes ahead, the Council would enter into a legal agreement with THCH. THCH would be bound to keep the promises set out in this document and the Council could take legal action against them if they do not.

Following transfer, the Council would continue to work in partnership with THCH. The Council would continue to have a strategic housing role even if the estate did transfer to THCH, which would include, for example, maintaining its duties to the homeless under the homelessness legislation and maintaining the Common Housing Register.

The Council would continue to be responsible for non-housing services for the Mansford & Avebury East Estates such as Highways, Leisure, Refuse Collection and Planning. The residents of the Mansford & Avebury East Estates would still be able to contact the Council in the usual way. Residents would still be required to pay their Council Tax in the same way as they do now. (The Council would also be responsible for administering Housing Benefit).

## How Your Homes Would Be Managed

### 5.14 How the Council would manage your home if transfer doesn't proceed

#### Investment

The Council cannot generate all of the investment needed in all of its homes in the foreseeable future. The Council has included the following major repair schemes in its current 4 year investment programme for Mansford Estate.

As this work programme is based on an estimate of the money that the Council will have available in the future, it cannot guarantee it will be able to carry out the work identified in the timescale proposed. This would depend on the Council having the anticipated amount of money identified and other more urgent work not having to take priority in the Council's Housing Investment Programme.

#### Day-to-Day Management

The Council will in future provide estate management services from larger centres which will also provide a wide range of other Council services. Estate management services include tenancy management, rents, leaseholder services and technical services. The current provision of local housing offices will change as a result of this move which is intended to result in

more efficient and effective services.

The Council will provide tenancy services from a reduced number of locations in future. These larger centres will have a dedicated reception service that will be able to deal with most of your queries. Where specialist services and advice are needed the reception service will pass your query onto the specialist team to address.

You will also in future be able to contact a customer contact centre which will be able to deal with a wide range of housing enquiries including repairs. There will continue to be a local caretaking presence and the proposed arrangements are intended to enable estate staff to spend more time on estates, carrying out estate inspections and home visits.

The Council will continue to provide the current range of services subject to any changes requested by residents e.g. concierge services. However, the location and ways of contacting the Council to receive these services will change.

Scheme	Details	Provision in Programme	Year(s) when works proposed
Adrian Boulton House	Rewire – R & L	£22,000	2006/07
Charles Dickens House	Structural Strengthening	£165,000	2005/06
Florida/Gossett/Roberta	Concrete Repairs, New Windows & Decorations	£600,000	2006/07
Nelson Gardens (Nine Blocks)	Window Renewal & Decorations	£1,500,000	2007/08
Total		£2,287,000	

## Section 6: Getting your views

**Your views are very important to us. We would particularly like to know :**

- what you think about the proposal
- whether you are satisfied with the information you have received
- if there is anything you are not clear about
- if there is anything that particularly concerns you

**You can reply to this by writing to:**

London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
HOUSING CHOICE  
FREEPOST LON 6467  
London E14 9BR

## Section 7: More Information

**Copies of the following are available from the Council on Freephone 0800 783 6845 on request:**

- Housing Corporation document called “What is a Housing Association / Registered Social Landlord”.
- Charter for Housing Association residents and applicants.
- A list of Councillors with addresses.

**If you need any further information or have any queries or are unsure about anything you can contact:**

- The Council’s 24 hour Freephone Helpline on 0800 783 6845, or
- FIRST CALL, your independent adviser, on Freephone 0500 295 999 or post by writing to First Call, Prospect House, 2 Prince Georges Road, London SW19 2PX, or by Email at [mansford@first-call-housing.com](mailto:mansford@first-call-housing.com)
- Compton Gustave at THCH on 020 7780 3092

You can also seek advice from:

- Your Ward Councillor
- The Citizens Advice Bureau.
- A Solicitor (although you may have to pay for this advice)





## Section 8: Glossary of terms

A guide to some of the terms used in the offer document that maybe unfamiliar to you

Term	Explanation
<b>Cost floor</b>	This is the lowest price that the Council or Tower Hamlets Community Housing could sell a property for under the right to buy or preserved right to buy.
<b>Defensible space</b>	A semi private zone around blocks created to discourage unwanted access to blocks by non-residents
<b>Electoral Reform Ballot Services</b>	Independent and experienced service that organises elections.
<b>First Call</b>	First Call are independent consultants in public and voluntary service provisions and consumer research. They were appointed by the Mansford Estate Steering Group as Independent Resident Advisor to provide an independent source of information and advice about Housing Choice.
<b>Home Loss Payment</b>	The amount of money you would get as compensation for having to move permanently out of your home.
<b>Housing Corporation</b>	The Government appointed body responsible for funding and regulating registered social landlords.
<b>Housing management services</b>	The range of services from your landlord including things such as grounds maintenance, repairs, dealing with anti-social behaviour and rent collecting.
<b>Independent Housing Ombudsman</b>	An independent national organisation that would look into any complaint about your landlord.
<b>Inflation</b>	The Retail Price Index, which is a figure issued by the Government.
<b>Leasehold</b>	The legal right to collectively purchase the freehold of your block/estate subject to qualification.
<b>Enfranchisement</b>	The body that represents the independent social housing sector in the UK. They have around 1,400 non-profit housing organisations currently in their membership.
<b>National Housing Federation</b>	Not for profit organisation, such as a housing association, offering homes at affordable rents to people with housing need.
<b>Registered Social Landlord</b>	This is a written charter by the Housing Corporation (see under "H") of how it expects Tower Hamlets Community Housing to treat their residents. All registered social landlords should abide by this charter.
<b>Residents Charter</b>	A type of voting whereby each individual's vote is kept secret, but the collective total numbers of votes are revealed publicly.
<b>Secret ballot</b>	The Government Minister required to give his consent to the proposed transfer of the Estate to Tower Hamlets Community Housing.
<b>Secretary of State</b>	The name given to the stamp of approval that is given by the police to Estate designed in a way that makes them safer and more secure.
<b>Secure by design</b>	A tenant who has signed an agreement with their landlord (currently London Borough of Tower Hamlets) stating that they are a permanent tenant.
<b>Secure tenant</b>	
<b>Stage 1 consultation</b>	The legal name given to the period of formal consultation when the Council as landlords ask you as tenants what you think of its proposal for the future of the Estate.

## **Stage 2 consultation**

The legal name given to the period where the Council notifies tenants whether it wishes to proceed further with its transfer proposals. The Council will issue a letter setting out any changes to the transfer proposals following feedback from tenants during the Stage 1 consultation. By law tenants have 28 days from the date of the issue of the letter to lodge objections with the First Secretary of State at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The secret ballot normally takes place during this period although the period of the ballot could be less than 28 days.

## **The Estate Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH)**

Mansford

The Proposed new landlord for the Mansford Estate.

## **TUPE Regulations**

Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 (as amended) preserve employees' terms and conditions when a business or undertaking, or part of one, is transferred to a new employer.

## **TRA**

Tenants and Residents Association, a voluntary formally constituted body of residents formed to further the interests of residents on an estate.

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