



This document is IMPORTANT and concerns the possible transfer of YOUR HOME to EASTENDHOMES in the near future

Formal consultation on the proposed
regeneration and transfer of the

Christchurch,

(including Riverside, Schooner and Manchester estates)

Cubitt Town

(including Chapel House estate)

and West Ferry Estates

(collectively known as the Island Gardens area)

to EastendHomes

Part I

Offer Document

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1 The Vision for the Island Gardens estates

Section 1

The Vision for the Island Gardens estates

London Borough of Tower Hamlets and EastendHomes have been working with residents from the Christchurch, Cubitt Town and West Ferry Estates for 14 months. These are referred to as the "Island Gardens Estates area" or "the Estates" throughout this document. Together we want the estates to be a place where people choose to live, bring up their families and retire: a place where everyone lives in a modern, affordable home in a safe and pleasant environment. If tenants vote for this proposal the estates will transfer to EastendHomes. EastendHomes proposes to invest £15 million in the estates over a 5 year period.

In consultation with residents in the Island Gardens estates area, EastendHomes 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, but will also improve the security and environment of the area.

The programme proposed by EastendHomes will:

- Ensure all tenants' homes benefit from repairs and improvements to bring them up to a decent, modern standard.
- Improve safety and security on the estates
- Create an attractive environment for all to be proud of
- Provide a new local housing management service with a local caretaking and cleaning team
- Develop an effective and efficient local repairs service with locally based handypersons for each estate
- Set up a resident-led management committee who will say what services they want and to what standard; and
- Improve community facilities

This proposal represents a unique opportunity to bring about this vision.

Section 2

London Borough of Tower Hamlets’ Transfer Proposal

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2 Transfer Proposal

2.1 What is the Council proposing?

Tower Hamlets is consulting you about the proposal to transfer the ownership and management of its homes on the Island Gardens estates area to EastendHomes.

Background to "Housing Choice"

The Government requires all Council landlords to bring their homes up to a certain standard by 2010. This is called the Decent Homes Standard and it requires that homes are in a reasonable state of repair, having reasonably modern facilities and are safe and warm. The Decent Homes Standard is a basic standard which the Council cannot meet through its own resources and the Council therefore started "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 the estates between June 2001 and February 2002, culminated in a referendum 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 estates be developed.

Stage 2

This stage entailed a steering group of residents from the estates selecting a partner organisation from a range of social housing providers to become the potential new landlord of the estates, subject to a ballot of tenants. The steering group of volunteer residents for the Island Gardens estates chose EastendHomes as the partner landlord with which to work on plans to improve the estates and housing service.

EastendHomes was chosen for the following reasons:

- EastendHomes will be a new registered social landlord (RSL) independent from the Council.

- EastendHomes will enable the residents to have a greater input into how the organisation is developed and run. It was therefore felt that the trust between residents and the new organisation could be built upon and fostered.

- EastendHomes proposed that the area will have its own separate local housing organisation, with a management board made up of local residents. This new organisation would be called the Island Gardens Neighbourhood. The board will be formed with proportionate representation from tenants and leaseholders from each of the estates.

Stage 3

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

If the transfer proceeds, EastendHomes would become your landlord and the regeneration of the estates detailed in section 3 would begin. Information about EastendHomes is set out in section 5 of this document.

The transfer would only go ahead if a majority of the tenants on the estates voting in the proposed secret ballot, vote in favour of transfer. All Secure and Introductory Tenants on the estates would get a vote. This would not include anyone occupying a property as a non-secure tenant.

It is proposed that a ballot will take place over a period of approximately 2-3 weeks but before the ballot we want to hear your views and comments on the proposal to transfer.

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 October 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 estates will come to an end.

2.2 Why is the Council proposing transfer?

The Council knows that the Island Gardens estates area need regeneration, but it does not have the money necessary to do this level of work. So it has worked with Island Gardens residents to develop this proposal.

Over the past 14 months there have been specific meetings with resident groups, public meetings, drop-in sessions, exhibitions, advice surgeries and newsletters.

The Council and residents have said there is a need for major investment to improve all homes, address security issues and improve the environment and amenities on the estates. Money is needed to:

- increase security and safety on the estates
- undertake a major programme of improvement and refurbishment
- deal with anti-social behaviour on each estate through design measures as well as by providing estate wardens
- bring all properties up to Decent Homes standard
- carry out structural repairs
- undertake improvements identified as a priority by residents, such as children's play areas
- provide better community facilities

The estimated cost of carrying out the investment needed on the estates which is set out in this proposal is £15 million. There is no provision in the Council's current investment programme for schemes on the Estates between now and 2007.

The Council has therefore looked at every option available to provide the level of regeneration and service that both it and the tenants would want. Transfer to EastendHomes is the best available solution.

2.3 Why can't the Council invest what is needed?

Because 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 current 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 estates.

2.4 Why would EastendHomes be in a better financial position?

EastendHomes 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, EastendHomes would be able to use all the money it receives from preserved right to buy sales on providing homes and services.

2.5 The key benefits of the transfer

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

- A major regeneration programme on the Island Gardens Neighbourhood area of £15 million.
- Residents would have a direct say in the management of the estates through the Island Gardens Neighbourhood board of management made up of local residents from each of the estates.
- Better value for money as, whether or not transfer goes ahead, your rent will only go up in line with Government policy. However, with transfer, the estates would be regenerated as described in section 3.
- The protection of your key rights would be guaranteed through a contract between the Council and EastendHomes and by a new assured tenancy agreement. The proposed new tenancy agreement is set out in a separate booklet.
- To provide an efficient, local, responsive service in the day-to-day management of homes, estates and community facilities.

2 Transfer Proposal

2.6 What would happen if the transfer does not go ahead?

If the transfer does not go ahead, you would remain a Council tenant and the Council would keep its responsibilities as your landlord.

If tenants vote against transfer it will not be possible for the Council to undertake the proposed improvement and redevelopment programme. This is explained in section 6.18 further on in this document. The Council 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. The Council cannot fund the regeneration proposals set out in this document.

2.7 What is the timetable for consultation?

Our summary of the timetable is as follows:

Date	Event
Formal Consultation Period February 2005 to March 2005	The Council will issue the formal consultation document and begin an intensive programme of resident consultation. This will include meetings and visiting residents in their homes. Residents are asked to feed back their views to the Council during this period.
End of Formal Consultation March 2005	The Council and EastendHomes will consider the views of residents and discuss how these should be taken into account.
“Stage Two” Notice Period Spring 2005	The Council will send a letter to tenants telling them of the outcome of the consultation. This letter will say: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whether or not the Council is going to proceed to a ballot• Whether or not it is going to make any changes to the formal offer as a result of residents’ views It will also explain that the letter marks the start of the 28 day period for tenants to lodge any objections on the offer with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
Ballot Period Spring 2005	If the Council has decided to continue with the process, then two postal ballots, one of tenants and one of leaseholders will be conducted by an independent organisation called Electoral Reform Ballot Services.
Ballot Result Spring 2005	The result 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 Secretary of State gives his permission, it is expected that EastendHomes will take over the housing on the Island Gardens area estates.

Section 3

The regeneration of the estates

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3 The regeneration of the estates

3.1 Repairs and improvements to homes

If the transfer goes ahead, your homes and the Estates would benefit from a massive programme of repairs and improvements.

Within 5 years of transfer, EastendHomes intends to spend £15 million on your Estates. Repairs and improvements would bring homes up to modern standards and make them more comfortable to live in.

EastendHomes will then provide programmed maintenance that will ensure that the properties remain in their improved condition for 30 years. Tenants' aspirations could change over the 5 year period so the works of repair and improvement proposed in this section are subject to detailed consultation with tenants and also subject to planning permission and other consents that may be needed.

The Council could not match this level of investment.

Repairs

A major programme of repairs will bring all homes up to the Government's minimum standard, which is also known as the Decent Homes Standard (see Section 3.5 for more details). In addition to these important repairs there would be a large programme of improvements.

Improvements

Tenants have said that kitchens and bathrooms are their priorities. So all homes that need them would have:

- a new kitchen, with a choice of wall tiling colours, kitchen units and floor coverings;
- a new bathroom with a choice of tiled surrounds and floor coverings.

If individual tenants do not wish to have these improvements they would not have to have the work done unless there are health and safety reasons for doing so.

If leaseholders wish to have internal works undertaken – for example new kitchens and bathrooms – EastendHomes will offer this work at cost for those leaseholders who would like this work undertaken.

The following pictures are representations of what the kitchens and bathrooms in the properties to be refurbished could look like.



3.2 How have residents been involved?

The consultation exercise began with a series of events with residents to identify the problems you have with your homes, blocks and estates. Residents have been involved in the development process from the beginning with the establishment of the Estates working parties.

Residents led the process of appointment of Shillam+Smith, Architects who set about consulting residents on each Estate through questionnaires, Estate meetings and working party meetings. The information gathered from these events helped to identify residents' opinions of their homes, blocks and Estates.

The architects commissioned technical reports on the structure, mechanical and electrical condition of each building so that a schedule of repairs could be drawn up for each Estate.

Should tenants vote in favour of the proposed transfer there will be a need for a great deal more consultation after the ballot. Detailed design issues will be discussed on a block by block basis as the programme continues.

Consulting residents on the future of their homes

3.3 New homes

As well as the repair works guaranteed in this offer document, EastendHomes will investigate the potential for building new homes on the estate. The sale of these homes would generate additional income only to be spent on the estates. Any proposals for building new properties would only be put into effect following full and detailed consultation with local residents.

There are no plans to demolish any of the existing homes.



3 The regeneration of the estates

3.4 Works descriptions

A list of core works has been drawn up for each block to bring it up to a good base standard. The standards set will be common to all blocks included in the proposed transfer.

Some of the works are not structural but will add to residents' quality of life. Examples include better security, improved designs of staircases and block entrances, communal TV aerials, environmental improvements and safe play areas for children.

Work Categories

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

WORKS DESCRIPTION

STRUCTURAL REPAIRS

- All concrete and brickwork areas to be repaired where defective and cleaned where necessary.
- External decorations to be carried out.
- Damp proof courses to be in good order.
- Cavity walls to be insulated to Building Regulation standards where possible.
- Insulation and fire break installations.

OVER-CLADDING AND THERMAL IMPROVEMENT

- Where blocks suffer badly from decaying concrete and very poor insulation they will be over-clad with insulated render on all outside walls to prevent the concrete from further exposure to the weather and enable the building to retain heat.
- Cavity wall/loft/roof space insulation.

REPAIR/RENEW ROOF

- All roofs will be surveyed for defects and repaired where necessary. If a roof has come to the end of its useful life it will be entirely renewed and insulation will be increased in line with current regulations.

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

- 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 floor covering.
- Plumbing for washing machine, space for fridge, gas (where possible) and electric cooker points and mechanical ventilation.

WORKS DESCRIPTION

NEW BATHROOMS

- Bathrooms to have hard wearing fittings with tiled surrounds.
- New durable floor covering.
- Pull cord light switch, new bath and basin.
- Mechanical ventilation.

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/WALKWAY REPAIRS

- Private balconies and walkways will be repaired including the balustrades, asphalt surfaces, soffits and fascias.

REPAIR/RENEW ENTRANCE DOORS

- All tenants entrance doors will be improved or replaced to make them achieve the "secure by design" standard.

DOOR ENTRY SYSTEM WORKS

- Door entry systems will be overhauled or replaced if necessary and new systems will be installed subject to the agreement of the majority of residents.

ESSENTIAL LANDLORD SERVICES

- Repair and improvements will be made to the following where necessary. Lighting, lightning conductors, dry risers, gas and electric mains.
- Stairs, hallways and balconies to be redecorated. Adequate lighting to be provided for all stairs, landings and balconies.

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.

REPAIR/RENEW LIFT

- Existing lifts and lift motor rooms to be overhauled or renewed.
- Lift cars to be adequately lit and fitted with alarm systems.

DRAINAGE WORKS

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

3 The regeneration of the estates

WORKS DESCRIPTION

IMPROVE REFUSE DISPOSAL

- Improved refuse disposal systems to be introduced to prevent open bin chambers.
- Recycling provision on each estate.

BLOCK ENTRANCES

- Improved entrances to reduce anti-social behaviour, exclude intruders and enhance the appearance of the block.

LANDLORD SERVICES

- Communal satellite/digital TV aerial.
- Multi-compartment trunking on access balconies to protect wires for phones, cable TV, lighting etc.

INTERNAL SERVICES IMPROVEMENTS

- Works to heating systems, fire check doors to kitchens, electrical wiring where necessary, re-siting of meters where necessary.

EXTERNAL WORKS INCLUDING SECURITY WORKS, LIGHTING, COMMUNITY FACILITIES, LANDSCAPING, CAR PARKING, PAVING AND PLAY AREAS

- Attractive, hard-wearing landscaping to be provided in close consultation with residents and in accordance with sustainability principles.
- Safe play areas for children on estates.
- Security fences and gates, estate lighting, new car parking layouts, community facilities on each estate.

3 The regeneration of the estates

The following table identify by block the refurbishment works proposed in the first 5 years if the transfer goes ahead.

Christchurch Estate

	Capstan House	Carvel House	Castleton House	Clipper House	Empire Wharf Rd (flats)	Farnworth House	Frigate House	Galleon House	Glengarnock Ave	Grosvenor Wharf Rd (flats)
Core works										
Structural repairs			✓			✓			✓	
Over-cladding/Thermal improvement					✓				✓	✓
External decorations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Repair/renew roof			✓			✓				✓
New kitchens	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New bathrooms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Repair/renew windows			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Balcony/walkway repairs			✓			✓				
Repair/renew entrance doors			✓			✓				
Door entry system works			✓			✓		✓		
Communal areas improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Essential landlords' services			✓			✓				
Essential internal services			✓			✓				
Repair/renew lift			✓			✓		✓		
Drainage works	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Block entrances	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	
The following works are subject to resident consultation, planning approval and the development of new homes for rent and sale.										
Improved refuse disposal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Landlord services improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internal services improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
External works including security, lighting, community facilities, landscaping car parking, paving and play areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

3 The regeneration of the estates

The following table identify by block the refurbishment works proposed in the first 5 years if the transfer goes ahead.

Christchurch Estate

	Manchester Rd (flats)	Salford House	Seyssel Street	Stebondale Street	Urmston House	Billson/Kingfield/ Parsonage	Empire Wharf/Grosvenor Wharf/Saunders Ness Rd Houses	Manchester Rd/ Manchester Grove
Core works								
Structural repairs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Over-cladding/Thermal improvement						✓	✓	
External decorations		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Repair/renew roof						✓		
New kitchens	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New bathrooms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Repair/renew double glazed windows				✓		✓	✓	✓
Balcony/walkway repairs		✓			✓			
Repair/renew entrance doors						✓		
Door entry system works			✓					
Communal areas improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Essential internal services						✓		
Drainage works	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Block entrances	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
The following works are subject to resident consultation, planning approval and the development of new homes for rent and sale.								
Improved refuse disposal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Landlord services improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internal services improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
External works including security, lighting, community facilities, landscaping car parking, paving and play areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

3 The regeneration of the estates

The following table identify by block the refurbishment works proposed in the first 5 years if the transfer goes ahead.

West Ferry Estate

	Arethusa House	Akbar House	Conway House	Exmouth House	Rodney House	Triton House	Warspite House	Brassey House
Core works								
External decorations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Communal areas improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New kitchens	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New bathrooms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Balcony/walkway repairs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Essential internal services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Drainage works	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Block entrances	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The following works are subject to resident consultation, planning approval and the development of new homes for rent and sale.								
Improved refuse disposal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Landlord services improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internal services improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
External works including security, lighting, community facilities, landscaping car parking, paving and play areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

3 The regeneration of the estates

The following table identify by block the refurbishment works proposed in the first 5 years if the transfer goes ahead.

Cubitt Town Estate

	Cahir St /Chapel House St /East Ferry Rd/Harbinger Rd/Hesperus Cres/ Macquarie Way/ Spindrift Ave /Thermopylae Gate/ West Ferry Rd	Harbinger Road flats	Julian Place flats	Thermopylae Gate flats
Core works				
Structural repairs	✓			✓
Repair/renew roof	✓	✓		✓
External decorations				✓
Repair/renew double glazed windows	✓	✓	✓	✓
Communal areas improvements				✓
New kitchens	✓	✓	✓	✓
New bathrooms	✓	✓	✓	✓
Balcony/walkway repairs		✓		
Repair/renew entrance doors	✓		✓	✓
Door entry system works			✓	
Essential landlords' services	✓			✓
Essential internal services	✓			✓
Drainage works	✓	✓	✓	✓
The following works are subject to resident consultation, planning approval and the development of new homes for rent and sale.				
Improved refuse disposal	✓	✓	✓	✓
Landlord services improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internal services improvements	✓	✓	✓	✓
External works including security, lighting, community facilities, landscaping car parking, paving and play areas	✓	✓	✓	✓

3 The regeneration of the estates

3.5 What could the Estates look like in 5 years time?

The following plans are a representation of what the Island Gardens Estates area could look like following the redevelopment and improvement programme set out in this Section. These are subject to any changes which may be necessary, for instance to take account of planning requirements and further consultation with residents.



New entrance for Salford House



Attractive improvements for Cubitt Town



Improvements for street properties in Cubitt Town

As well as improving the homes, buildings and environment during the initial major works programme EastendHomes will continue to invest time and resources in the care and upkeep of the area so that it continues looking good well into the future.

3 The regeneration of the estates

3.6 Regeneration of the estates and general estate improvements

In addition to the repairs and improvements to the homes, there is a range of specific proposals, which will help to improve the neighbourhood generally, by providing more and better facilities.

The following proposals for the Estates have been made following resident consultation. If the transfer goes ahead, there would be further consultation to work out the details.

Following consultation with residents, improving the environment came high on people's lists on all the Estates, such as providing improved security and better entrances to blocks. Residents also want somewhere suitable for children to play and communal gardens that would be properly maintained and attractive to both residents and wild life. The Island Gardens Neighbourhood is committed to the adoption of sustainability principles to guide the future management of the estate environment.

Other improvements included in the master plan are treatment of roads and footpaths, blocking off undesirable through routes and creating "home zones" to reduce traffic speed and make the estate roads safer for children.

Safe Play Areas

Improved safe play areas for children will be incorporated in the works programme. The improvements will be decided in consultation with residents and the works will be designed to balance the needs of all residents.

Community Facilities

EastendHomes will improve or develop community facilities for residents in accordance with residents' requirements e.g. youth facility, crèche, pensioners club, and community horticulture. The Island Gardens Neighbourhood will ensure the provision of new, additional services for the elderly, for example help in maintaining gardens or benefit entitlement advice, from the local office.

Would tenants have to pay extra for these works?

No. All repairs, modernisation and improvement work, would be carried out at no extra cost except where new door entry/security systems are installed for the first time. These items would attract a weekly service charge but would only be installed after detailed consultation with residents.

3.7 Minimising inconvenience to tenants during the works programme

EastendHomes is committed to ensuring that any inconvenience caused by the works to the Estates would be kept to a minimum.

The aim is to:

- Produce a practical building programme in consultation with residents.
- 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, EastendHomes officers would visit each tenant to make sure their individual circumstances are taken into account before refurbishment starts.

The builders would be instructed to look after your belongings 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, and a resident liaison officer would be employed to deal swiftly with any queries or concerns regarding the works.

The resident liaison officer would be sensitive to the cultural needs of the communities on the Estate. Measures would also be put into place to ensure the safety of residents and workers throughout the build programme.

3 The regeneration of the estates

3.8 How would leaseholders be affected?

The Council is consulting separately with leaseholders about the transfer proposal.

If you would like to receive a copy of the leaseholder consultation document please call the Council Freephone number set out in Section 8 and request a copy.

In summary, if the transfer goes ahead leaseholders' rights would stay the same and their leases would be unchanged. EastendHomes would become the freehold owners of the property.

Where the improvement programme set out in this document could affect leaseholders, consultation will take place with every individual leaseholder on the options available to them.

EastendHomes is committed to working with all leaseholders on the Island Gardens area to ensure that the full range of options is explored. A number of options will be developed to help leaseholders meet their share of any major works costs. These options will include payment by instalment, low interest loans, deferred payment via a charge on the property and the setting up of a leaseholders' fund.

Examples of home zones

Pedestrian priority residential streets.

Features of a home zone:

- Cars have to travel slow and safely, making it safe for children to play on their own
- Drivers have to give way to pedestrians and cyclists, and are responsible for any injuries they cause to them
- Very slow speed limits, 5-10mph
- Traffic calming with speed bumps and chicanes



3 The regeneration of the estates



Added security at Riverside



Security improvements at Westferry



New security option for Riverside



Upgraded safer entrances



Concierge changes at Galleon House aimed at reducing nuisance

Section 4

Your rents and other charges

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4 Your rents and other charges

4.1 Keeping your rents low

Whether or not the transfer goes ahead your rent would be set in line with Government policy. This means there would be limits on what you could be charged and how rents would increase, with the intention of keeping rents affordable

4.2 Housing Benefit

The transfer would not affect your entitlement to claim housing benefit. If the transfer takes place, you would still apply to the Council for benefit and, if you are eligible, it will either:

- pay it to you; or
- pay it directly to EastendHomes as rent.

4.3 The Government's rent reforms

The Government has introduced a policy for rents which applies to all councils and registered social landlords. Under this policy properties of a similar size in a similar area will carry a similar rent regardless of whether the landlord is a local authority or a registered social landlord (RSL).

The Government's rent policy means that the rents will be worked out in a similar way whether or not transfer takes place.

A "target rent" is calculated for each social housing property. This formula has to take account of:

- The market value of the property compared with the national average value of housing association and local authority properties.
- London average earnings compared with national average earnings.
- The number of bedrooms the property has.

Rents will change until they reach the target rent which both Council and other social landlords are expected to reach by 2012. The maximum rent increase that Registered Social Landlords like EastendHomes may make in any one year is inflation plus 0.5% plus £2 per week. For many tenants it will be less than this.

Once the target rent is reached for your home, then under current Government guidelines your rent would increase by just inflation plus 0.5%. Please note that the statements above set out the current government guidelines on rent increases for RSLs and local authorities which could change.

4.4 What would happen to rents if transfer goes ahead?

The table below shows what your rent is likely to be. There would be no additional rent increases as a direct result of the repairs and improvements set out in this document. The rents set out in the following table are based on current government guidelines which could change.

Average weekly rent excluding service charge, water rates and the effect of inflation					
Year	Property Size				
	Bedsit	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
2004/5	£50.15	£60.96	£73.32	£84.10	£99.16
2005/6	£52.40	£63.26	£75.68	£86.52	£98.02
2006/7	£54.66	£65.57	£78.05	£87.58	£98.51
2007/8	£56.93	£67.89	£80.41	£88.01	£99.00
2008/9	£59.21	£70.22	£80.81	£88.45	£99.50
2009/10	£61.50	£71.42	£81.21	£88.90	£99.99
2010/11	£62.35	£71.77	£81.62	£89.34	£100.49
2011/12	£62.66	£72.13	£82.03	£89.79	£101.00

NB. After the target rent is reached your rent will increase by no more than inflation plus 0.5% under current government guidelines

4.5 What would happen to rents if the estates stay with the Council?

If the transfer does not go ahead, the Government's new rent policy would still apply and your home would still have to meet the target rent for the area. However, the major regeneration programme proposed in this document would not take place. The Council does not have the money needed to fund the regeneration proposals. Any money it has needs to be spent over the 23,500 properties across the Borough.

4.6 Tenants' Service Charges

Until April 2004 the Council "pooled" rents with service charges so that, where services (like caretaking, cleaning and maintenance of the grounds) were provided to tenants, these were included within the amount you paid as rent. From April 2004 the Council has decided to "unpool" the rents and service charges and now service charges are separated from rent. The table (see 4.4) excludes the proportion of your rent that goes towards services. We estimate that, on average, this is approximately between £4.50 and £5.00 at present.

Your landlord, whether it is the Council or EastendHomes will continue to separate out the amount that is charged for services from the amount charged as rent.

This is so that you can see what you are actually paying for and to ensure that you only pay for services you benefit from. This would not be an additional payment unless tenants choose to receive a new service. It would simply be separated on your rent statement

If tenants have new services, for example a concierge or CCTV system, then your landlord would have to charge you for them.

Remember: Both the Council and EastendHomes would only be able to charge tenants the actual cost of providing these services – they are not allowed to make a profit.

4.7 Paying your rent

If transfer goes ahead, you would be able to pay your rent in the same ways as you do now. That is at a post office, bank, building society or by direct debit. You will automatically receive a rent statement every 3 months. This will give details of all charges and payments made to your rent account. You would also be able to request a rent statement at any time.

4.8 What would happen if you fall behind with your rent?

The Council and EastendHomes agree that firm action should be taken against tenants who owe rent. EastendHomes will try to help tenants from getting into arrears in the first place. Information on how, when and where to pay will be given to all new tenants. EastendHomes staff will help tenants complete Housing Benefit application forms where necessary and send these to the Council's Housing Benefit Section.

EastendHomes will notify tenants who do get into arrears at an early stage and will maintain contact until the arrears problem is resolved. EastendHomes will do all it can to help tenants in genuine financial difficulty but will expect arrears to be paid. EastendHomes will take appropriate legal action where necessary to recover arrears including court action for possession. Transfer to EastendHomes would not remove a tenant's responsibility to clear any arrears built up with the Council. The arrears would be transferred to EastendHomes who would expect the tenant to enter into an agreement to repay the arrears by appropriate instalments.

Under the terms of your tenancy agreement EastendHomes will ensure that the only grounds that may be used if you are in rent arrears are similar to those currently used by the council in possession proceedings against secure tenants. The mandatory ground for possession, namely Ground 8 of the Housing Act 1988, which requires the Court to grant possession if an assured tenant is in eight weeks rent arrears at the time of the Court hearing, would not be used by EastendHomes. Further, EastendHomes will not use Ground 11 of the Housing Act 1988 which gives the court a discretion to grant a possession order where the tenant has persistently delayed in paying rent.

4 Your rents and other charges

4.9 Water Rates

At present, secure tenants pay water charges direct to the Council in addition to their rent. If transfer goes ahead, EastendHomes would collect the water charges for the existing properties, subject to the agreement of the water company.

In new properties, water meters will be installed (this is a government requirement for all new properties) and tenants would pay the water charges directly to the water company.

4.10 Your Council tax

You would still have to pay your Council Tax to the Council. You can still claim Council Tax Benefit from the Council.

4.11 Garages, parking spaces

If you pay for a garage or parking space in the Island Gardens area you would continue to do so but your payments would be made to EastendHomes rather than the Council.

4.12 What rent would new tenants pay?

New tenants are those who become tenants of EastendHomes on the Christchurch, Cubitt Town, and West Ferry Estates after the transfer. It is proposed that new tenants would pay the same rent and service charges as existing tenants who transfer.

4.13 Insurance

EastendHomes can offer tenants the opportunity to insure the contents of their home by joining EastendHomes' Contents Insurance Scheme. The premium can be paid either weekly, monthly or annually.

Section 5

About your proposed new landlord, EastendHomes

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5 About your proposed new landlord, EastendHomes

5.1 Who are EastendHomes?

EastendHomes will be a not-for-profit, Registered Social Landlord 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.

EastendHomes will provide high quality homes and housing services to the people who live in the Island Gardens estate area. EastendHomes will be accountable to residents and will enable you to make decisions at a local level about the services you receive. EastendHomes will have a legally binding agreement with a number of Community Housing Organisations across the Borough. Your housing organisation would be Island Gardens Neighbourhood. The residents of Island Gardens would be responsible for deciding:

- what services will be provided on the Island Gardens estates area
- how these services will be provided on the Island Gardens estates area

EastendHomes expects to own and manage up to 5,000 homes in Tower Hamlets. All surplus money will be used to fund the provision of new homes, maintain existing ones and fund other housing and community related activity. If the transfer goes ahead EastendHomes will own the transferred properties and land on the Christchurch, Cubitt Town and West Ferry Estates and will be the landlord of the tenants and leaseholders.

EastendHomes is a not for profit organisation, which means that all of its income would be 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 EastendHomes. Every penny would have to be properly accounted for.

Very strict rules apply to registered social landlords for example EastendHomes:

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

- has a constitution which prohibits payment of anything other than out-of-pocket expenses to board members. Any change would require the Housing Corporation's consent.

As a registered charity EastendHomes will also need to comply with the rules and regulations set down by the Charity Commissioners, make itself available for inspection and submit all appropriate reports to ensure ongoing charitable status.

5.2 Who manages EastendHomes?

EastendHomes is governed by a Board of Management. The duties of the 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.

The EastendHomes governing board consists of 8 residents, 7 independent Community Board members (including the Board Chair) and 4 Councillors nominated by Tower Hamlets Council. The resident representatives consist of the Chairs of each Estate Steering Group who have chosen to work with EastendHomes. Board members are selected on the basis of their expertise, experience and suitability to do the job. The Board members are not paid, but are reimbursed for the expenses of attending meetings, for example travelling or child-minding costs.

EastendHomes will be an "umbrella" organisation with constituent local community housing organisations. Residents will have a major part to play in helping to set up and run these local organisations. The residents of the Estate(s) will elect the boards of these local organisations.

5 About your proposed new landlord, EastendHomes

Main Board

The board of EastendHomes has very significant resident representation.

The board has places for:

- 8 Resident Members
- 7 Independent Members
- 4 LBTH Councillor Members

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

The shape and direction of the new organisation will be formed through its close involvement with the local community.

Eight resident board members will come from the constituent local housing organisations within EastendHomes, including the Island Gardens Neighbourhood.

Residents will be involved both as full EastendHomes board members and through involvement in the local estate community housing organisations. EastendHomes sees resident involvement as fundamental to providing quality services to local people that meet their needs and aspirations.

Currently the resident members of the main board of EastendHomes are the chairs of the individual local Steering Groups, Estate Management Boards or Community Housing Trusts. Provision also exists in the legal constitution of EastendHomes, for direct elections to the board from amongst the overall resident membership from all Estates owned and managed by EastendHomes.

The 4 councillor members of the board are nominated by Tower Hamlets Council.

At present EastendHomes is still in its formative stages and as a result has not filled all its places on the Board. The present EastendHomes board members are:

Independent Members

Joanna Killian – Director (Comprehensive Performance Assessment), Audit Commission

Jack Bradley – Literary Manager: National Theatre, and local resident

Abdal Ullah – Vice Chair, Metropolitan Police Complaints Authority, and local resident

Martin Young – Barrister, and local resident

Resident Members

Bernie Cameron – Mile End Community Housing Trust – local resident

Mary Nepstad – St Georges Estate – local resident

Richard Roberts – Barleymow Estate – local resident

Margaret Clarke – Glamis Estate – local resident

Tom Madden – West Ferry Estate – local resident

Phillip Gates – Solander/Shadwell estates – local resident

(To qualify as an EastendHomes resident board member, elected members must be EastendHomes residents.)

Councillor Members

Cllr Denise Jones (Labour) – St Katharine's & Wapping Ward

Cllr Motin Uz-Zaman (Labour) – Mile End East Ward

Cllr Ashton McGregor (Labour) – Limehouse Ward

Cllr Louise Alexander (Liberal Democrat) – Weavers Ward

5 About your proposed new landlord, EastendHomes

Independent Members

Joanna Killian

Joanna has extensive experience in housing management, having worked in a number of social housing organisations. She also has extensive experience at a senior level in housing regeneration and has had responsibility for project management and delivery of major regeneration programmes.

She has been Assistant Director of Housing (housing needs and regeneration) in a London Borough and until recently held the position of Chief Housing Inspector for the London Region at the Audit Commission.

Her current post is Director of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) also at the Audit Commission.

Jack Bradley

Local resident (Limehouse)

Employment:

1995 – Present

Literary Manager, Royal National Theatre

1994-1995

Scripts Advisor, Royal National Theatre

1989-1994

Literary Manager, Soho Theatre

1983-1989

Freelance playwright, workshop leader, reader for theatres including: Royal Court, Royal Manchester Exchange, Soho Theatre Company

1982 – Present:

Freelance playwright, correspondent

Teaching: Occasional lecturer at UEA, University of Essex, ILEA and intermittent British Council teaching abroad including South Africa, Serbia, Argentina.

Abdal Ullah

Profession: Community Development and Youth & Educational Pathway Consultant

Currently working at Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust Sure Start Weavers & Spitalfields

Interested in community regeneration

Currently the youngest member of the Metropolitan Police Authority

Media appearances relating to relationships in communities, drugs, youth and crime problems.

Martin Young

Current Chair of EastendHomes Board

Barrister

Member of the Council of London Borough of Tower Hamlets (1994-2002) – member of the Housing Services Committee

Chair, Local Area Partnership 8 2002

Vice Chair, Isle of Dogs Community Foundation 2003 – Helped to found Braithwaite House Tenants Association

Familiar with urban regeneration policies and structures

Member of the Samuda EMB (1997-2003)

Member of London Borough of Tower Hamlets Personnel Appeals Panel when in office.

Councillors

Cllr Denise Jones

Denise Jones is Councillor for the St Katharine's & Wapping ward.

She is the Council representative on a number of outside bodies, including:

ALG Culture & Tourism Committee (Vice Chair)

ALG Leaders Committee

Arts Council London Local Authority Forum (Chair)

Women's Library Council

National Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green

Mile End Park Partnership Board (Chair)

Local Area Partnership 4 (Chair)

Cllr Jones is a Governor at Mulberry School for Girls, and also a Board Member of:

Half Moon Young People's Theatre

Greenwich & Docklands International Festival

5 About your proposed new landlord, EastendHomes

Wiltons Music Hall Trust
Aldgate, All Hallows & Barking Foundation
Eastside Books

Trinity Buoy Wharf Cultural Quarter

Rich Mix Cultural Foundation

Arts Council (London) England

She was a teacher in Tower Hamlets junior schools from 1970-1975. She is a founder member of Eastside Arts & Bookshop in Whitechapel where she currently works and of Stepney Books Publications. She was given the Freedom of the City of London in 2002.

She is currently a member of the Cabinet serving as Deputy Leader of the Council.

She was Chair of Arts, Leisure & Sports Committee from 1994-1998, and Mayor from 1999-2000. She served in the new Cabinet system as Lead Member for Social Inclusion and Equalities from 2000-2001.

Cllr Motin Uz-Zaman

Motin Uz-Zaman is the Lead Member for Environment. He has been a Cabinet Member for the last three years and was Lead Member for Equalities & Social Inclusion until 2002.

He has been a Councillor in Tower Hamlets since 1998 and represents the Council on various bodies and panels as well as on a number of Boards and is a trustee of Bromley by Bow Centre. Cllr. Uz-Zaman currently chairs the Public Transport Forum and one of the Local Area Partnerships. He is also actively involved as a School Governor.

He works as a Director for an educational charity.

Cllr Ashton McGregor

Ashton McGregor is a Labour Councillor for Limehouse Ward in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Since being elected in 2002, he has led investigations into promoting civic engagement through ICT (e-participation) and into improving citizen access to Council services (with a focus on CRM, call centres and One Stop Shops) and equalities issues.

Within the Council, Ashton has assisted in developing a councillors' learning and development programme and in updating the Council's constitution.

Professionally, he is a management consultant in the Metropolitan Police Service, developing solutions to improve services and performance and supporting change within the organisation.

He has represented the Council on a number of external bodies. He was appointed to serve as a Board Member of Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust in 2002/03, and continues to be a Director of Leaside Regeneration, a company set up to drive forward the regeneration of the chain of former industrial sites along the west bank of the River Lea.

Cllr Louise Alexander

Louise Alexander was elected to serve the residents of Weavers Ward as a Liberal Democrat in May 2002. She is the Shadow Spokesperson for Housing.

She became involved with housing issues because the majority of her casework concerned housing problems.

Professionally, Cllr Alexander works as an Accountant with Working Mens College in Camden, and is currently involved with Operation Black Vote and in setting up Citizens Inquiry, a high profile research project into the state of democracy in the UK. Cllr Alexander is a Director of Cultural Industries Development Agency, a member of the East London Line Group and the Chair of the Tower Hamlets Vice Sub Group which is working to get women out of prostitution.

5 About your proposed new landlord, EastendHomes

Resident Members

Bernard Cameron

Vice Chair of EastendHomes Board

Bernard has devoted enormous energy and commitment over many years to promote a safer environment in Tower Hamlets and to improve conditions and facilities in the area.

Since 1995, he has been chair of the Bow South Police Sector Group working closely with local police and the community to ensure an appropriate policing response to the community he represents. For the last five years, he has organised an annual event where the emergency services organise displays for the general public. Thousands of people attend and the event allows the emergency services to forge closer links with the community as well as providing an opportunity for greater accessibility and promotion of their work.

Bernard has been active in the British Street Tenants and Residents Association for more than a decade and works tirelessly to raise funds to provide facilities for his local community. This includes an annual Christmas party which he runs alongside other volunteers. He has also been involved in a project to build a sports hall for use by the community in Mile End.

Mary Nepstad

(St Georges estate steering group chair)

Mary is secretary/treasurer of the St George's TRA, and also chair of the estate steering group which choose EastendHomes as their RSL.

Mary is an active member of the Tower Hamlets Pensioners Forum and the Greater London Forum (GLF), and also the London Older People's Strategy Group (LOPSG) which is associated with the Greater London Authority. She supports the National Pensioners Convention in their endeavours to obtain better conditions for all pensioners.

As a governor of the St Katherine and Shadwell Trust she is a member of the panel which administers the Neighbourhood Renewal Community Chest (NRCC) Funds.

Richard Roberts

Richard has wide experience of both living and working in Tower Hamlets and is currently working as a consultant specialising in Community Development, Social and Economic Development, Training, Nurseries and Childcare.

Richard has been active since 1984 in the Barleymow Tenants & Residents Association playing a leading role in the regeneration of the estate over twelve years ago. Richard is a trustee of the St. Katharine and Shadwell Trust and a founding member of the Tower Hamlets leaseholder association.

Margaret Clarke

Margaret was a founder member of the Glamis Tenants & Residents Association when it was set up in 1978. And has lived on the estate since 1966. She has been the Chair of the TA for the last 10 years. Throughout her life, Margaret has been active in local charitable work including the running of a local Youth Club. When not looking after her family Margaret worked for the Civil Service gaining valuable bookkeeping experience, which has helped Margaret support many of the community groups with which she has been involved.

Margaret is a life member of the St Katharines Charitable Trust and a former member of the Tower Hamlets Council Borough Wide Tenant Compact Group.

Tom Madden

Tom represents the Island Gardens area on the EastendHomes board. He was born in Southern Ireland and came to live in Tower Hamlets in 1953. He has lived on the Westferry Estate for over 20 years and was a founder member of the Westferry Tenants and Residents Association in 1982. Tom has been Chair of this TRA for over 18 years and has also been a member of the Isle of Dogs Tenants Council and the Police Consultative Committee for the Island. In the 1980's he travelled extensively in Europe and spent time teaching English in Yugoslavia. Tom has been retired for over 15 years and has spent much of his retirement campaigning for improvements to the Westferry Estate and the surrounding area.

5 About your proposed new landlord, EastendHomes

Island Gardens Neighbourhood

Local decision making, accountability and local delivery of services is at the heart of the EastendHomes approach.

In the Island Gardens area EastendHomes proposes setting up an Estates Board in partnership with local residents. The Estates Board will have representation on the main board of EastendHomes.

In summary, the Island Gardens Neighbourhood:

- Will have responsibility for the day-to-day management of its Estates
- Will have its own staff to run the service
- Will have its own local office
- Will be able to decide on the type of service it wants to provide on its Estates
- Will have responsibility for managing its own budgets
- Will be accountable for the quality and efficiency of the service that is provided locally

A shadow board for Island Gardens area, made up of local residents, has been meeting regularly since January 2004. The Shadow Board has overseen all the consultation work and the development of the estate improvement options over the past 15 months. Formal elections would be held for the Island Gardens Neighbourhood Board if transfer goes ahead.

In short, the Estates Board will be a new, independent local housing organisation developed in partnership with and for the residents of the Estates in the Island Gardens Estates Area.

5.3 Who regulates EastendHomes?

EastendHomes is a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee, registered with the Housing Corporation. This is the government body 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 equal opportunities.

EastendHomes will produce annual reports to tenants, which will include details of their annual accounts and performance.

In addition, EastendHomes, 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.

5 About your proposed new landlord, EastendHomes

5.4 Statement from the Chief Executive of EastendHomes

EastendHomes were chosen by the Island Gardens Steering Group in December 2003

Our approach from the start has been to put you the residents in control of the process of developing proposals for the regeneration of your Estates and the setting up of a new local housing service.

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

We have been working with you now for 14 months and in that time have carried out very extensive consultation on each Estate. We are grateful to all that have kindly given up their time to help shape the ideas and plans that are set out in this offer document.

During the consultation you told us many things about your Estates and homes. What you liked or disliked, what the key problems are; how you would like the Estates improved and made safer; and how you would like to see local housing services set up with you, the residents, in control of the service.

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

If the transfer goes ahead we will work with you to establish a local community-housing organisation for the Island Gardens Estates under the umbrella of EastendHomes. This will be your local housing organisation with residents in control of the service. This organisation is made up entirely of residents from your Estates and it will oversee all of the work to be carried out in developing plans to secure a better future and a housing service which meets your priorities and aspirations.

This part of our work is now complete. The choice is now up to you.

The Council have 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 you are 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 £15 million in the Island Gardens Estates area over the next 5 years.

And the work we have carried out with your representatives on the board of the Island Gardens Neighbourhood will mean that a new local service can be developed which will be tailored to the needs of your Estates. It will be service of which you can be proud.

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

Paul Bloss, Chief Executive, EastendHomes

Section 6

How your homes would be managed

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6 How your homes would be managed

6.1 Local estate office and staff structure

A local Housing office will be based within the Island Gardens estates area and have the following staff:

- Neighbourhood Housing Manager
- Estate Officers
- Assistant Estate Officers
- Repairs Officer
- Handypersons
- Caretakers/Cleaners

Estate Wardens

In addition to the above, EastendHomes proposes to introduce a new Estate warden service subject to further resident consultation. The Estate warden service will involve regular Estate patrols by uniformed officers. This should improve security and reduce anti social behaviour on the Estates for all tenants and leaseholders. Like other services, such as cleaning and concierge, the wardens would be paid for through a service charge.

6.2 Local management of the estate

The Island Gardens Neighbourhood will provide the following services from a local housing office at Galleon House, 137 Manchester Road, London, E14 3DN. The main functions of the local housing management services will be:

- day-to-day repairs and maintenance
- estate cleaning and caretaking
- tenancy management
- leasehold management
- tackling anti-social behaviour and harassment
- void (empty) property management
- accompanied viewings for new tenants
- lettings and transfer requests

The Island Gardens Neighbourhood will:

- work closely with residents to develop and improve the delivery of day-to-day housing services
- involve you in decisions about the improvement programmes for the Estates

- provide effective customer care training and standards for all staff
- have named officers responsible for service delivery in the Island Gardens Neighbourhood area
- have a policy of openness and accountability 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

6.3 The housing management service

EastendHomes will provide a full range of financial and corporate services to support the local housing management organisations, including the rent accounting and service charges.

Open and Transparent Service

A publicised cleaning programme for all estates, agreed with residents, setting out what cleaning tasks take place on what days. A clear record of the completion of the cleaning tasks will be kept on open display 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 will be agreed with residents and publicised. All caretakers will receive training and guidance on the various method statements on an ongoing basis.

6.4 Repairs service

Island Gardens Neighbourhood will have responsibility for the repairs and maintenance service provided to the Christchurch, Cubitt Town and West Ferry Estates.

A high quality, customer-orientated day-to-day local repairs service will be provided. The service will:

- Operate an appointments system for the carrying out of repair work;
- Adhere to published priority timescales for the completion of repair work wherever

6 How your homes would be managed

possible, and ensure that all tenants are aware of these timescales;

- Ensure that all contractors undertaking housing repairs abide by a code of conduct designed to ensure high standards of customer care;
- Survey contractors' work whilst they are on site to ensure that repairs and installations are carried out satisfactorily, without damaging, weakening or affecting the appearance of the building.
- Monitor tenant satisfaction with the repairs service, and ensure that any complaints about the service are investigated promptly.

Local handypersons will be employed to carry out routine day-to-day repairs. They will be locally based and known to local residents and knowledgeable of the repairing needs of the Estates. Larger or more specialist repairs will be carried out by contractors who will be selected by the residents assisted by technical staff from Island Gardens Neighbourhood and EastendHomes.

EastendHomes will have a planned maintenance programme that will ensure the properties are kept in good repair on a cyclical basis. For example, drains will be regularly cleaned.

EastendHomes will ensure that all tenants are treated equally in respect of the repair and maintenance of their homes, and that all tenants have equal access to the service. The Island Gardens Neighbourhood will give additional consideration to the needs of the elderly or housebound.

6.5 Responsive repairs and customer service standards

EastendHomes will ensure that all staff are aware of the organisation's repair responsibilities. Training and guidance will be given to ensure that staff can order and specify repair work accurately.

Information on how to order repairs will be made available to all tenants. When ordering a repair, tenants will be given a receipt and a job number for the repair they have requested.

6.6 Appointments

For non-emergency repairs carried out by contractors of Island Gardens Neighbourhood, an appointment system will operate. Tenants will be offered compensation where the contractor does not keep these appointments and the money will be reclaimed from the contractor.

6.7 Repair timescale

Repairs will be completed within timescales, which are agreed with the Island Gardens Neighbourhood Estates Board for the Estates. These will be publicised.

Emergency repairs: respond and complete within 24 hours

Urgent repairs: respond and complete within 3 working days

Priority repairs: respond and complete within 7 working days

Normal repairs: respond and complete within 20 working days

6.8 Right to repair

If work is not completed within the specified timescale, the tenant may, in certain circumstances, request that Island Gardens Neighbourhood uses a second contractor. If the second contractor fails to complete the work on time the tenant may claim compensation from Island Gardens Neighbourhood. Information about this Right to Repair will be publicised to tenants. (See EastendHomes Policy-Compensation and Payments).

Island Gardens Neighbourhood will offer a service to leaseholders to carry out repairs at cost including administration.

6.9 Out of hours emergency repairs

EastendHomes will, in agreement with Island Gardens Neighbourhood, publicise its arrangements for dealing with out of hours emergency repairs.

6 How your homes would be managed

6.10 Code of Conduct and quality monitoring

All staff involved in the delivery of the repairs service, both EastendHomes officers and contractors used by EastendHomes, will be expected at all times to treat tenants with courtesy and respect; to ensure that no damage is caused to tenants' belongings in the course of carrying out work; and to leave tenants' properties clean and tidy following the completion of work. All contractors will be expected to abide by a Code of Conduct, to be drawn up by EastendHomes, which will address these.

6.11 Caretaking and cleaning

EastendHomes recognises that the care and maintenance of an estate by a local caretaker can make a dramatic difference to its appearance. The caretaking staff will be fully supported through the use of proper cleaning equipment and training. Staff will also benefit from the introduction of local, 'on the spot' management.

The Island Gardens Neighbourhood will have responsibility for the caretaking and cleaning service provided to the Christchurch, Cubitt Town and West Ferry Estates.

A new caretaking and cleaning service will include the following:

Full Resident Involvement

Residents will be involved in monitoring the service via joint inspections with the managers of the service. The findings of the residents will be reported to the Island Gardens Neighbourhood Board on a regular basis.

Cleaning Backlog

At the start of the new service the communal areas will benefit from an intensive cleaning programme. This cleaning 'blitz' will bring all areas up to an acceptable cleaning standard, which the estate caretakers will then maintain.

Locally Managed Service

The Local Neighbourhood 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 a locally based office.

Weekend Service

It is recognised that many residents are keen to have a good cleaning service over the weekend period and the new cleaning programme will allow for the introduction of an improved weekend service.

6.12 Anti-social behaviour

Statement of Intent

EastendHomes is committed to ensuring that all tenants and leaseholders enjoy their right to peace, quiet and security in their homes. EastendHomes will take firm and prompt action in dealing with disruptive tenants and any other persons causing a nuisance or harassment on Estates or in individual dwellings. EastendHomes recognises that anti-social behaviour has a negative impact on people and neighbourhoods.

Appropriate Action

EastendHomes will 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 EastendHomes' powers under the Housing Act 1996 and anti-social behaviour legislation.

If the anti-social behaviour is persistent or acute and the perpetrator is a tenant of EastendHomes they will:

- ask the tenant to sign an acceptable behaviour contract (ABC)
- serve notice that they will seek possession and, if this does not act as a deterrent, go to court to seek a possession or demotion order
- seek an injunction to enforce the terms of the tenancy agreement
- 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 action to be taken under the Crime and Disorder Act

6 How your homes would be managed

- 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, EastendHomes will take a pro-active approach to identify them including the use of covert surveillance and professional witnesses as well as EastendHomes staff, caretakers and wardens as appropriate.

Inter Agency Approach

EastendHomes will work 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, EastendHomes will use its powers under the lease to take action against the lessee or sub-tenant. This includes the use of injunctions and action for forfeiture.

6.13 Harassment

EastendHomes 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

This policy is intended to cover all forms of harassment

EastendHomes believes in equality, and is committed to ensuring that its residents are able to live without fear of harassment, intimidation or attack. EastendHomes is opposed to all forms of harassment, and will 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 the EastendHomes.

Work In Partnership with the Community

EastendHomes' strategy will 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. EastendHomes will adopt practices that will contribute towards the development of harmonious communities in the Borough.

Victim-Centered Approach

EastendHomes will be guided by the victim in determining the most appropriate course of action in responding to an incident of harassment.

Monitoring and Taking Improvement Action

All complaints received will 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. EastendHomes' Director of Housing and its Service Delivery committee will regularly review complaints received and consider appropriate action to tackle problems that are persistently raised, reporting their findings to the Board.

6.14 Complaints policy

EastendHomes is committed to providing a high quality efficient and effective service to all its residents and applicants for housing but recognises that sometimes people may be dissatisfied with its services or mistakes might be made in service delivery.

EastendHomes is keen to obtain feedback from service users to inform reviews of the services it provides and the way in which it provides them.

It will also operate clear and well-publicised procedures for receiving and dealing with complaints which will be dealt with within stated timescales.

EastendHomes will ensure 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.

6 How your homes would be managed

6.15 Residents' involvement and consultation

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

EastendHomes 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 organisations' vision and services.

Island Gardens Neighbourhood and EastendHomes will facilitate and enable residents to express their concerns and aspirations individually and collectively.

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

Island Gardens Neighbourhood and EastendHomes 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.

Masterplan Implementation

The major works programme is crucial to the future of the Island Gardens neighbourhood. Significant consultation has taken place with residents to ensure all views are considered in preparing the masterplanning framework. This is an important first step. If tenants vote in favour of transfer a further detailed consultation exercise will take place with residents on the detail of how the improvement to the estate will be carried out.

Consultation

Island Gardens Neighbourhood and EastendHomes will consult residents widely on a variety of issues, including proposed changes in policy and practice, service delivery performance, housing management and major works. Consultation will be carried out through both recognised residents groups, including Tenant & Resident Association, and with individual residents as appropriate.

All residents will be fully consulted at the earliest opportunity. Residents will be given a full and clear explanation of the proposals and their implications, and adequate time to consider the proposals. Consultation methods may include:

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

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

EastendHomes will give individual residents a range of different media to register their views and influence policy. This will enable continuous review and improvement of service delivery. These methods include:

- Comprehensive residents' satisfaction surveys to be carried out on an ongoing basis. From these EastendHomes will produce and publicise an Action Plan of improvements to residents.
- Monitoring of residents' satisfaction with our maintenance contractors and handy person.
- Regular newsletters to be used as a medium for encouraging feedback.

6 How your homes would be managed

- Ad hoc telephone and postal surveys or consultation will be carried out on a regular basis. These will be in the appropriate community languages.
- Effective monitoring of all complaints received to ensure any trends are noted and improvements in service delivery made.

The findings of all consultation exercises will be analysed and reported back to inform the decision making process.

6.16 Choice Based lettings

Common Housing Register

The Council operates a Common Housing Register and all RSLs with stock in Tower Hamlets are invited to participate. A choice-based lettings policy was introduced in July 2002, which means that vacant properties, including those RSL properties to which the Council has nomination rights, are advertised and bids invited by applicants waiting to be rehoused. Reasonable preference is determined through the use of banding into a number of priority groups.

Full membership of the Common Register by EastendHomes means that their tenants have access to the full range of empty properties on an equal basis with council tenants on the transfer list. The Council believes that tenants should not have their opportunities of moving diminished by stock transfer and will therefore expect all RSLs that receive stock via Housing Choice to join the Common Housing Register.

Homelessness

The Council will ensure that the proposed transfer will not affect the supply of accommodation to assist vulnerable households. As well as ensuring that those accepted as homeless and in priority need are able to access the Choice Based Lettings System, there will continue to be close monitoring to ensure that homes from all transfer landlords continue to be available to this client group. Empty homes in blocks that are being decanted as part of regeneration programmes continue to be used as valuable temporary accommodation as part of the strategy to end the use of Bed and Breakfast as temporary accommodation.

6.17 What would be the role of the Council following transfer?

If the transfer goes ahead, the Council would enter into a legal agreement with EastendHomes. EastendHomes 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 EastendHomes. The Council would continue to have a strategic housing role even if the Estates did transfer to EastendHomes, 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 Christchurch, Cubitt Town and West Ferry Estates such as street cleaning, Highways, Leisure, Refuse Collection and Planning. The residents of Island Gardens area would still be able to contact them 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).

6 How your homes would be managed

6.18 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 no major repair schemes in its current 4-year investment programme for the Island Gardens Estates area. This work programme is based on an estimate of the money that the Council will have available in the future.

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 will 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. The current Millwall Housing Office may cease to be the Housing Office for the Island Gardens area and Housing services may be provided from elsewhere in the borough if transfer does not take place.

Section 7

Your rights after transfer

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7 Your rights after transfer

7.1 How would your rights be affected if the transfer goes ahead?

Council tenants have a 'secure tenancy' or an 'introductory tenancy'. With EastendHomes you would have an 'assured tenancy'.

The main difference is that as a secure tenant of the Council you have rights that are laid down in law (mainly the Housing Act 1985). As an assured tenant with EastendHomes your rights would be protected by a different law (the Housing Act 1988) and also by your contract (tenancy agreement).

Tenants' rights

The following chart summarises your rights now and shows you the rights you would have after Transfer. Introductory tenants have fewer rights than secure tenants. The table shows which rights introductory tenants do not have with the Council during the 12-month probationary period. On transfer even though they do not have as many rights as a secure tenant, introductory tenants will be given the same tenancy agreement as secure tenants.

Your Rights	Your rights now as a secure tenant with the Council	Rights now as an introductory tenant with the Council	Your rights with EastendHomes
The Right to Buy. (This would be known as the "Preserved" Right to Buy, if the transfer took place)	✓	X	✓
The Right to live in your home without the threat of being evicted without good cause	✓	✓	✓
The Right to pass on your home when you die - succession	✓	✓	✓
A second right of succession	✓	X	✓
The Right to make certain improvements and receive compensation for them when the tenancy comes to an end	✓	X	✓
The Right to have repairs carried out within set timescales	✓	✓	✓
The Right to be given information about the management of your home	✓	✓	✓
The Right to transfer or exchange your home	✓	X	✓
The Right to Manage	✓	✓	X
The Right to take in lodgers and (with permission) to sublet part of your home	✓	X	✓
The new Right to Acquire in certain circumstances	X	X	✓
The Right not to have your tenancy agreement changed (except for rent and service charge) without your consent	X	X	✓
The right to be consulted	✓	✓	✓

7.2 Would EastendHomes have more rights to obtain possession of your home than the Council?

No. EastendHomes would only be able to use the grounds for possession which are set out in the tenancy agreement at the back of this booklet. EastendHomes would not be able to use the mandatory ground for possession known as Ground 8 of the Housing Act 1988 which requires the court to grant possession if an assured tenant has eight weeks of arrears of rent at the date of the court hearing.

Also EastendHomes would not be able to use ground 11 which allows possession to be sought if a tenant persistently fails to pay the rent on time.

What rights would you gain after transfer?

Two rights would be gained through transfer. These are:

- The Right to Acquire would be available for all tenants of EastendHomes. See section 7.5 for more details.
- The right not have your tenancy changed without your written permission.

Succession: Because you would be signing a new tenancy agreement, some tenants would benefit from an additional right of succession. See below for more details. (7.6)

What rights would you lose after transfer?

You would lose one right because registered social landlords are not able to offer them within the contract. This is:

The Right to Manage allows tenants to take on the responsibility for the day-to-day management of properties and repairs by forming a properly constituted organisation called a Tenant Management Organisation. However, if tenant management becomes a realistic option, registered social landlords would give positive consideration to any proposals, subject to necessary approvals from Government and the Housing Corporation. Registered social landlords

would require any proposal to have the support of the majority of tenants involved.

7.3 Would I still have the right to buy my home?

If you have the Right to Buy your home with the Council, you would, immediately on transfer, have a Preserved Right to Buy with EastendHomes and your discount would still apply and be worked out in the same way.

This right remains with you or any member of your family who succeeds you even if you later move to another home which is owned by EastendHomes, as long as it is not exempt from the Right to Buy. Also, if you have the Preserved Right to Buy and later move to a Council home in another area, you would still have a right to buy and any discounts would include your time as a tenant of EastendHomes.

Future tenants of EastendHomes would not have the Preserved Right to Buy, but would have the Right to Acquire (see below).

7.4 What would happen to my discount?

Any discount you have built up would transfer with you and would continue to increase while you are a tenant of EastendHomes up to the maximum discount. In London this is currently £16,000. The discount would depend on your number of years as a Council tenant and later as a tenant of EastendHomes.

This is subject, however, to something called the cost floor. The cost floor is the minimum price that you could pay for your home, even if your discount would take the price below this amount.

The cost floor is the total of the amount spent by your landlord on buying, improving or building your home and includes repair and maintenance costs where these are above £5,500.

The cost floor is most relevant where a landlord has recently spent large amounts of money buying, building or improving the property or where large amounts of money have been spent on repairs and maintenance. With the Council,

7 Your rights after transfer

these costs are worked out (broadly) over a ten-year period before you buy your home.

However, EastendHomes would be able to take into account all costs incurred during the 15 years prior to your application to buy (starting at the point of transfer). EastendHomes would be able to include in the cost floor the cost of the catch-up repair works which would be carried out to tenants' homes and which are referred to in this document (see section 3.5) even if these costs have not actually been incurred at the time of your application to buy. However, EastendHomes would not be able to take into account costs previously incurred by the Council.

The difference is not likely to affect tenants in Tower Hamlets because the high value of homes in the Borough would normally mean that the price a tenant has to pay (even after a maximum discount of £16,000) would be significantly higher than the cost floor for their home.

Example

Mrs Brown's landlord has spent £15,000 repairing and improving her home within the last few years. This figure of £15,000 is the cost floor and Mrs Brown must pay at least this amount for her home.

Because of the number of years she has been a tenant, Mrs Brown is entitled to a discount of £16,000. Her house is valued at £80,000 and so she would have to pay £64,000 for it. As this is significantly more than the cost floor, the cost floor has no effect on her calculations.

7.5 The right to acquire

Tenants transferring from the Council, and new tenants of EastendHomes, may have the "Right to Acquire" their home. As a transferring tenant, you would be able to choose between this scheme and the Preserved Right to Buy, but you would not be able to benefit from both.

The maximum discount under the Right to Acquire is also currently £16,000. The amount of discount you would be entitled to under the Right to Acquire is a fixed grant amount for the area in which you live. The fixed amount for Tower Hamlets is £16,000 regardless of how long the tenancy is (subject to the minimum requirement).

Similar rules to those that apply under the Right to Buy scheme relating to repayment of discount and exclusions for some types of properties (such as sheltered housing) also apply to the Right to Acquire scheme.

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

The new tenancy agreement would allow for the tenancy to be passed on in the same way as now, and EastendHomes would also allow succession by same sex partners. Carers may also be considered in appropriate circumstances, for example where they have lived with the tenant for more than twelve months.

You would also retain the second right of succession that exists within your tenancy with the Council, if the transfer proceeds.

All tenants will start their new tenancy with two rights of succession.

7.7 Would I still be able to take in a lodger or sublet my home?

As an assured tenant of EastendHomes, you would be in the same position as a secure tenant of the Council. You would be able to sub-let part of your home with EastendHomes' consent and you would be able to take in lodgers.

7.8 Would I still be able to transfer or exchange?

Yes. EastendHomes aims to make the best use of its housing stock by helping with transfers and exchanges both within its stock and with other landlords. You would retain your right to exchange your home with another tenant. You will also be able to pass on your tenancy to a person entitled to succeed to your tenancy. Full details are set out in the proposed assured tenancy agreement at the back of this booklet.

EastendHomes would participate in HOMES (the Housing Organisations Mobility and Exchange Scheme) and the HOMESWAP Scheme which helps people to move to Council or RSL homes in other areas.

7.9 Your new tenancy agreement

If the transfer goes ahead you will be asked to sign a new tenancy agreement (see Booklet 2). Once you and EastendHomes sign the tenancy agreement, your rights in that agreement cannot be changed without your written permission. The only things that can be changed are the annual rent and service charges (subject to the Government's rules. See Section 4.4 and 4.6).

The only people who would not automatically receive the new tenancy agreement are those who have been issued with a Notice of Seeking Possession, an introductory tenant issued with a notice of possession proceedings or those tenants subject to possession proceedings or against whom the court has made a Possession Order. The Notice of Seeking Possession or Possession Order must still be valid and in force on the transfer date.

Tenants in this position would still transfer to EastendHomes as assured tenants but they would not have all the contractual rights set out in the new tenancy agreement. However, these tenants would be entitled to the new tenancy agreement if they subsequently remedy the problem and it would take effect as if it had been issued on the transfer date.

7.10 What is the position of new tenants?

People who become new tenants of EastendHomes after transfer would either be offered a tenancy agreement with similar rights to those being offered to you or an assured shorthold tenancy which would operate along similar lines to the introductory tenancies that the Council issues to all its new tenants. However, the main difference would be that new tenants would not have the Right to Buy. New tenants may be eligible for the "Right to Acquire" which is a similar right to the Right to Buy (see 7.5 above).

Section 8 Getting more information

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

- *Charter for Housing Association residents and applicants.*
- *A detailed summary of the comparison between your rights as Secure and Assured Tenants.*
- *A list of Councillors with addresses.*
- *Housing Corporation document called "What is a Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord".*

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*
- *PPCR, your independent adviser, on Freephone 0800 317 066 or Freepost by writing to; FREEPOST SE8640, The Grain Stores, 72 Weston Street, London SE1 3BR*
- *EastendHomes on 020 7538 2340*

You can also seek advice from:

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

Glossary of Terms

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

Term	Explanation
Assured tenancy agreement	<i>The new agreement that you would get as a tenant of EastendHomes (see section 9 Part II of your offer document for a copy of the proposed agreement).</i>
Assured tenant	<i>Your new tenancy agreement with EastendHomes would make you an assured tenant – rather than the term currently used by the Council – secure tenant.</i>
Residents Charter	<i>This is a written charter by the Housing Corporation (see under "H") of how it expects EastendHomes to treat their tenants. All registered social landlords should abide by this charter.</i>
Cost floor	<i>This is the lowest price that the Council or EastendHomes could sell a property for under the right to buy or preserved right to buy.</i>
Electoral Reform Ballot Services	<i>Independent and experienced service that organises elections.</i>
The Estates	<i>Christchurch, Cubitt Town and West Ferry estates, collectively referred to as the Island Gardens estates or the estates.</i>
Home Loss Payment	<i>The amount of money you would get as compensation for having to move permanently out of your home.</i>
Housing Corporation	<i>The Government appointed body responsible for funding and regulating registered social landlords.</i>
Housing management services	<i>The range of services from your landlord including things such as grounds maintenance, repairs, dealing with anti-social behaviour and rent collecting.</i>
Independent Housing Ombudsman	<i>An independent national organisation that would look into any complaint about your landlord. If you became an assured tenancy of EastendHomes.</i>
Inflation	<i>The Retail Price Index, which is a figure issued by the Government.</i>
EastendHomes	<i>EastendHomes the proposed new landlord for the estates and also the name of the housing organisation that Island Gardens Neighbourhood is a part of.</i>
Offer to tenants	<i>The Council's legal and binding offer document to tenants on its proposals for the estates.</i>
Preserved right to buy	<i>If transfer goes ahead tenants who are currently secure council tenants on the estate who have the right to buy would have the preserved right to buy after transfer.</i>

8 Getting more information

Glossary of Terms *continued*

Term	Explanation
Registered Social Landlord	<i>Not for profit organisation, such as a housing association, offering homes at affordable rents to people with housing need.</i>
Right to manage	<i>All Council tenants have the right to claim this. It is a government scheme allowing tenants to take control of the day to day management of their homes.</i>
Right to buy	<i>The Government scheme that allows Council tenants to buy their homes at a discount price. There are strict rules about who can claim this and how much discount you can get.</i>
Secretary of State	<i>The Government Minister required to give his consent to the proposed transfer of the estates to EastendHomes.</i>
Secure by design	<i>The name given to the stamp of approval that is given by the police to estates designed in a way that makes them safer and more secure.</i>
Secure tenant	<i>A tenant who has signed an agreement with their landlord (currently London Borough of Tower Hamlets) stating that they are a permanent tenant.</i>
Stage 1 consultation	<i>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 estates.</i>
Stage 2 consultation	<i>The legal name given to the period where the Council considers your views on its offer, adds any amendments to it and then writes you a letter to let you know whether there are any changes. By law there must be 28 days between you receiving that letter and the offer going to ballot. During this period you can make objections about the proposed transfer to the First Secretary of State.</i>
Succession	<i>The right to pass on your home to someone else in your family or household living there, when you die.</i>

Section 9 Legal Notice

Notice to tenants

London Borough of Tower Hamlets is proposing, subject to the result of a tenants' ballot, to transfer the ownership of all of its homes on the **Christchurch, Cubitt Town and West Ferry estates** to EastendHomes. Your new landlord would be **EastendHomes**, BUT IT WILL BE FOR YOU TO DECIDE.

The Council is committed to an open and detailed consultation process with its tenants about this proposal. The decision to consult you has been reached after careful consideration of the options available. Tenants are now invited to decide whether they wish to take advantage of what EastendHomes has to offer. EastendHomes will continue to and develop the work already carried out in maintaining your homes whilst keeping rents at affordable levels. The Council will take into account tenants' initial views on the proposal before deciding whether to hold a formal postal ballot and will not proceed further with or make a final decision on the transfer proposal unless a majority of the tenants concerned who vote on the issue vote in favour.

If the majority of tenants who vote in the ballot agree to a transfer, it is intended that the transfer will take place approximately six months after the close of the ballot.

The transfer cannot take place without the consent of the First Secretary of State for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which cannot be given if a majority of tenants are opposed to the transfer.

The Council and the Secretary of State must have regard to the views of the Council's secure tenants.

Details of the statutory requirements that the Council must comply with are available from the Council on freephone number 0800 783 6845.

