



OUR PLAN FOR 2023-26

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Find appendices on our [website](#), search ‘corporate plan’.

Do you need this document translated or in a more accessible format?

Please email inclusionanddiversity@wchg.org.uk.

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE



Nick Horne
Chief Executive

Our purpose is ‘to provide good quality homes and services to our tenants and leaseholders and to play a leading role in creating safer, healthier communities’.

Our corporate plan (our plan) sets the tone and vision of our business for the next three years. The important focus on **homes, services and communities** from our purpose has a clear golden thread through to the strategic themes and objectives of our plan. The first four build upon the themes of our 2020-22 Corporate Plan - **More Homes, Living Well, Great Places, Smarter Business** - and we’ve added two important new ones – **Value for Money** and **Carbon Reduction**.

Our 2023-26 plan aligns with ‘Brilliant Basics’, the first of three phases of organisational change and transformation. It champions our commitment to delivering the things that matter most to customers.

PHASE ONE
Brilliant Basics
2023-26

PHASE TWO
Stretch Shot
2026-29

PHASE THREE
Moon Shot
2029-32

It will ensure we work:

Fitter: Delivering services more efficiently.

Flatter: Reducing wasted time and work across our systems and processes, and empowering colleagues to take decisions closer to the customer.

Faster: Using new systems and ways of working that speed up how we deliver our services.

We’ll make sure our longer-term future is based on resilient finances and the ongoing ability to deliver our services. This will be supported by detailed actions, developed using what we’ve learned about the short, medium, and long-term needs and aspirations of our customers, our communities and Wythenshawe as a whole.

Nick Horne

Where will we be in 3 years time?

Understand our customers better

We’ll have learned more about the needs of our customers to provide tailored services and support.

Simpler processes

New technology will make things easier for our customers and us, streamlining support and communication.

Community cohesion

We’ll understand the root causes for anti-social behaviour (ASB), and use this to proactively reduce ASB in the community.

Stronger partnerships

Through stronger connections with relevant partners, we will be an active partner in the regeneration of Wythenshawe Civic Centre.

Supporting our customers to live well

Through our Living & Ageing Well Strategy, we’ll continue to support customers to live independently.

Greener future

We’ll have made our homes more energy-efficient and reduced our carbon impact for a better environment.

Continue to be a great place to work

We’ll have a better working environment for our colleagues, resulting in a better experience for our customers.

New homes

We’ll have built over 500 homes, with a focus on affordable housing.

Higher service standard

We’re striving to exceed expectations, offering more choices and better service.

Better homes

By 2026, we’ll have better data on our homes and they’ll be more energy efficient.

Enhanced digital experience

Our website and apps will be more helpful, so customers can self-serve more easily.



Customer Engagement
BBQ Summer 2022

A PLAN... THAT SUPPORTS CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITIES

Our plan has been designed to deliver above and beyond core housing services. Our well developed network of involved customers, volunteers and residents means we have a clear and ever-improving understanding of the needs and aspirations of local people and partners.


We want to continue building upon the many positives of Wythenshawe. These include its green and spacious areas, strong community spirit and local partnerships, as well as significant levels of inward investment, relatively affordable housing, and our presence and impact as a major provider of homes and services.

However, despite interventions and investment, areas of Wythenshawe continue to experience deprivation. **50%** of our homes are in the five most deprived areas of England.

All of these factors have played a major role in shaping our priorities.



MCC guest speaker at one of our Communitree/Community Connector events



41% OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING
national average 62.5%



42% SOCIAL RENTED HOUSING
national average 17.1%



26,600 PEOPLE RENT OUR HOMES
of 79,224 local residents

A PLAN... SUPPORTED BY FOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Our business model is underpinned by four competitive advantages. These enable us to better deliver our purpose for the benefit of customers, communities, colleagues and partners.

Our four competitive advantages are:



We have a highly concentrated property portfolio which allows efficient delivery of services and gives us a detailed knowledge of Wythenshawe's homes and green spaces.



The depth and breadth of our community partnerships and we provide homes for **33%** of Wythenshawe residents giving us unmatched scale and influence in the community and with partners.



Our high level of community knowledge, connectivity and trust that has been built over many years. This is supported by having **42%** of our colleagues (as of March 2023) living in the area, and **20%** also being our customers.



We have a resilient financial structure and business plan with strong cash generation, as well as relatively low debt and healthy interest cover.



Customer Engagement BBQ Summer 2022

A PLAN... THAT ADDRESSES THE BIG EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CHALLENGES

The objectives of our plan are grouped around six strategic themes. Each of these addresses one or more critical business, customer, community or sector challenges.

Our Board and its committees will be making sure we deliver our plan successfully. They will assess whether any changes to the internal or external environment mean we need to change the scope, timing or nature of our objectives.



Living Well

We will continue to engage and listen to our customers to **understand their needs**. This will help us improve our services and the customer experience. We will address anti-social behaviour and its causes as we know this is important to our customers. We will also empower the local communities we work with through our **LIFE** model approach (**Lead, Influence, Follow, Exit**), and by developing and implementing our Living and Ageing Well Strategy.



Great Places

We are rising to the challenges of **higher building safety** and property standards. This will include continuing to improve the knowledge of our assets to support value-for-money investment choices and meeting the increasing demand from customers to maintain and improve their homes, all while investing in the Garden City environment of Wythenshawe.



More Homes

We aim to increase the supply of new affordable homes across Wythenshawe and neighbouring areas – our objective is to develop **200** homes every year, with a pipeline of **1,000** homes.



Smarter Business

We will continue to invest in our inclusive environment of **people, skills, culture, technology, systems, processes and business infrastructure**. This will allow us to meet the increasing expectations of customers, communities, colleagues, partners and other stakeholders all while retaining our robust finances.



Value for Money

We will build on our **resilient financial position**, making sure every pound we spend adds social and/or financial value to support the delivery of our purpose. Our VfM strategy is focussed on delivering tangible cash benefits, optimising the impact of our social investment, and investing to deliver future benefits (invest to save).



Carbon Reduction

We are proud to be working in partnership with GM Housing providers and MCC to reduce our reliance on carbon. We measure our carbon use annually, setting challenging targets to reduce our impact upon the environment. During the life of this plan our focus will be on raising our housing stock EPC ratings to **SAP C** and achieve the 2030 target for all homes. We will also build **10%** of new homes using Modern Methods of Construction.

ABOUT WYTHENSHAWE

Wythenshawe is bordered by some of the most affluent areas of north west England, with Altrincham and Hale to the south west, Sale to the north west and Cheadle to the east.



Key positives include:

-  Inward investment to improve the area's infrastructure and services
-  Great transport and connectivity
-  It was job rich pre-pandemic with 1.6 jobs per working-age person
-  A strong community spirit and supportive local partnerships
-  Relatively affordable housing compared to local areas
-  The positive influence of our ongoing investment over many years and our role as a major local anchor organisation
-  Firm proposals from Manchester City Council to redevelop Wythenshawe Civic Centre

ABOUT WYTHENSHAWE COMMUNITY HOUSING GROUP

We're more than Manchester's largest social housing provider. With **492** dedicated colleagues (April 2023) and **29,000** people calling our homes their own, we're a successful and ambitious organisation committed to delivering good quality homes and services.

We own and manage **14,000** properties in Wythenshawe and **41%** of local people live in our homes. **42%** of our colleagues also live in Wythenshawe and almost **20%** of them live in our homes. This gives us a unique view of our customers and community, and the challenges they face, and means our role has a major impact on local people and the wider community.

Our aim is to deliver **1,100** new homes over the next five years with an estimated **£195m** investment. Within this, our target for housing types is 70% social or affordable rent, 30% shared ownership and open market sale.

As a major anchor organisation and place shaper, we will continue to listen to, understand and respond to the changing needs of our customers and the community. This will shape how we rebalance our skills and resources, in partnership with others, to create the most positive and value-for-money impact.



Aerial view of the Benchill area of Wythenshawe

KEEPING US ON TRACK

Our plan has been developed during a challenging period, not just for the social housing sector but also for our customers. The most significant challenges are summarised below. A more in-depth look at the challenges can be found in ‘The context of our corporate plan’ (pages 20-29).

- The Social Housing (Regulation) Bill and the RSH Consumer Standards
- Increased building safety regulations and a move to lowering carbon emissions
- The Better Social Housing Review and subsequent focus on property conditions
- Political uncertainty, with three prime ministers in 2022 and a General Election in the lifetime of our plan
- Global uncertainty highlighted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the increasing threat from climate change
- The **7%** rent cap for social housing properties from 1 April 2023, with **10%+** cost pressures in core areas of the business including construction materials and labour
- The cost of living crisis, which includes high inflation and energy bills
- Rising customer expectations and the freeing up of supply chains post-pandemic
- Challenging labour markets and the acute shortages of skills across many disciplines
- A Manchester-wide context of progress in some key areas (e.g. delivery of new homes), but with significant challenges in child poverty, educational achievement, life expectancy, health outcomes and homelessness

A big influence in developing our plan has come from listening and responding to the diverse voices of our customers and the wider Wythenshawe community. Our significant work in this area is detailed in ‘Our customers and hearing their voices’ (pages 16-19).

The delivery of our plan will be overseen by the Board and its committees via regular updates on our progress. Performance indicators will be used to assess our progress and these are included with the objectives in ‘Strategic themes and objectives’ (pages 33-49). These are part of a wider performance framework and track our plan’s delivery journey.

The Board recognises the likelihood that changes in the external environment, or other factors, can and will change the direction of our strategies during the lifespan of our plan.

When this is considered likely to happen, the Board will consider the changes needed to scope, timing or impact of existing plan objectives, and the development of new updated objectives, to allow us to continue to deliver our purpose.

*Pauline Murphy,
Volunteer at Bideford
Community Centre*



*Michelle Gregg, Board Member, and
Paul Butterworth, Executive Director
of Assets, at a Board meeting*



Around **20%** of our **492** colleagues are also our customers. This employee and community connection complements our size and the concentration of our homes, to give us a unique competitive advantage. Because, even though there are other registered providers (RPs) with homes and developments in Wythenshawe, it is impossible for any regional competitors to match our scale, local influence and the impact of our services.

Wythenshawe is also a place of contrasts. On the one hand it provides an attractive green and spacious environment that benefits from a strong community spirit, excellent

road, rail and air transport links, high numbers of local jobs and relatively affordable housing compared to neighbouring areas. On the other hand, parts of Wythenshawe have high levels of deprivation which adversely affects many of our customers, local communities and the demands on our resources.

This combination of opportunities and challenges means we have a crucial role to play in order to fulfil our ongoing commitment to go beyond delivering ‘core’ housing services. The characteristics of Wythenshawe, together with the aspirations of the people who live here, are a significant

influence on us and give us a responsibility to deliver a breadth of services unusual for a registered provider.

In Wythenshawe and across Manchester, our partners see us as a major local employer, investor, support provider and enabler who builds on the strengths of local people, organisations and the wider community. We have pioneered a successful, community-focused partnership approach to how we deliver our services and invest in our communities. As a result, we are proud to have strong levels of customer engagement and involvement.



**20% OF OUR 492
COLLEAGUES ARE ALSO
OUR CUSTOMERS**

as of April 2023





**WE ARE RESPONSIBLE
FOR 20% OF 70,000
SOCIAL HOMES**

in the city of Manchester

Of the **17** registered providers working in Manchester, we are the largest landlord, responsible for **20%** of the c.70,000 social homes in the city. As a result, we are an influential partner of Manchester City Council (MCC) and have a positive and trusted working relationship, one which we value highly and work hard to maintain. Delivery of the objectives in our plan will support MCC in delivering key elements of their ‘Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025’.

We are also an influential member of the Manchester Housing Providers Partnership,

and in South Manchester we work with MCC and partners (including health, blue light services, social services, education) to support an integrated approach to working in neighbourhoods.

Across Greater Manchester (GM), we manage just over **5%** of the c.260,000 homes owned by the 24 GM RPs. We also work with GM RPs and the GMCA and their partners, to deliver regional priorities such as tackling homelessness and digital exclusion.

The current economic, social and political environment presents significant challenges,

as well as opportunities, that together make navigating the next three years a testing time.

Our business model generates strong cash flows and is robust when stress tested. As a self-aware organisation, we know what we are good at, and what we need to do to improve customer satisfaction across our services.

Overall, we are well placed to take advantage of future opportunities and effectively manage challenges in order to deliver our plan.



OUR CUSTOMERS AND HEARING THEIR VOICES

We are committed to making our services as accessible as possible and delivering fair outcomes for customers. To improve how we do this, we are continually improving our knowledge of our customers and are investing in the skills and systems to make this happen. This will allow us to improve how we respond to customer needs, including what services we provide, how we provide them and how we work with our partners to provide services they are better placed to offer than us.

We also provide services to:

- ✓ Wythenshawe residents who visit our community centres, such as young people who access our youth services
- ✓ People who represent our customers, including MPs and Local Councillors with whom we have trusted and productive relationships

Our primary customers are:

17,300 LEAD TENANTS

28,400 HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

15,000 HOUSING APPLICANTS

on Manchester Move (choice-based city wide lettings).

There were **170,000 bids** for Wythenshawe properties in 2021/22, demonstrating high demand for our homes. As of March 2023, there are **6,750 applications** on Manchester Move, from individuals or households, for rehousing in Wythenshawe. This demonstrates enormous demand for homes.



950 LEASEHOLDERS INCLUDING

355 SHARED OWNERS

We are working to increase the data and insight we have about our customers and are using what we're learning to shape our service delivery improvement strategies. While we still have more work to do in developing a fully

comprehensive understanding of our customers, we have sufficient data to develop seven customer personas. These allow us to bring our different customer groups to life and see data, such as customer satisfaction scores,

from a range of perspectives and going beyond protected characteristics. An example of one of these personas is below, reflecting the **21%** of our customers who are retired.

21% RETIRED



Bill and Jean Moore

"I care about my home and the area I am in..."

Biography:

We have lived in Wythenshawe our whole lives and have been customers of WCHG for 23 years. We have been married for 40 years now, love our home and are looking to eventually downsize as we both have mobility issues. We are both retired and like to keep ourselves busy with our many hobbies, like reading and gardening.

Wants and needs:

- A home that will meet their mobility needs
- The ability to contact WCHG via phone or in person
- To feel heard when they give feedback to the Group

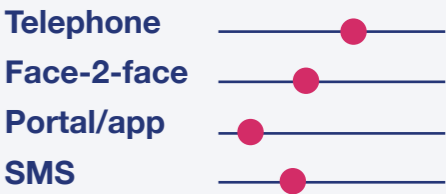
Frustrations:

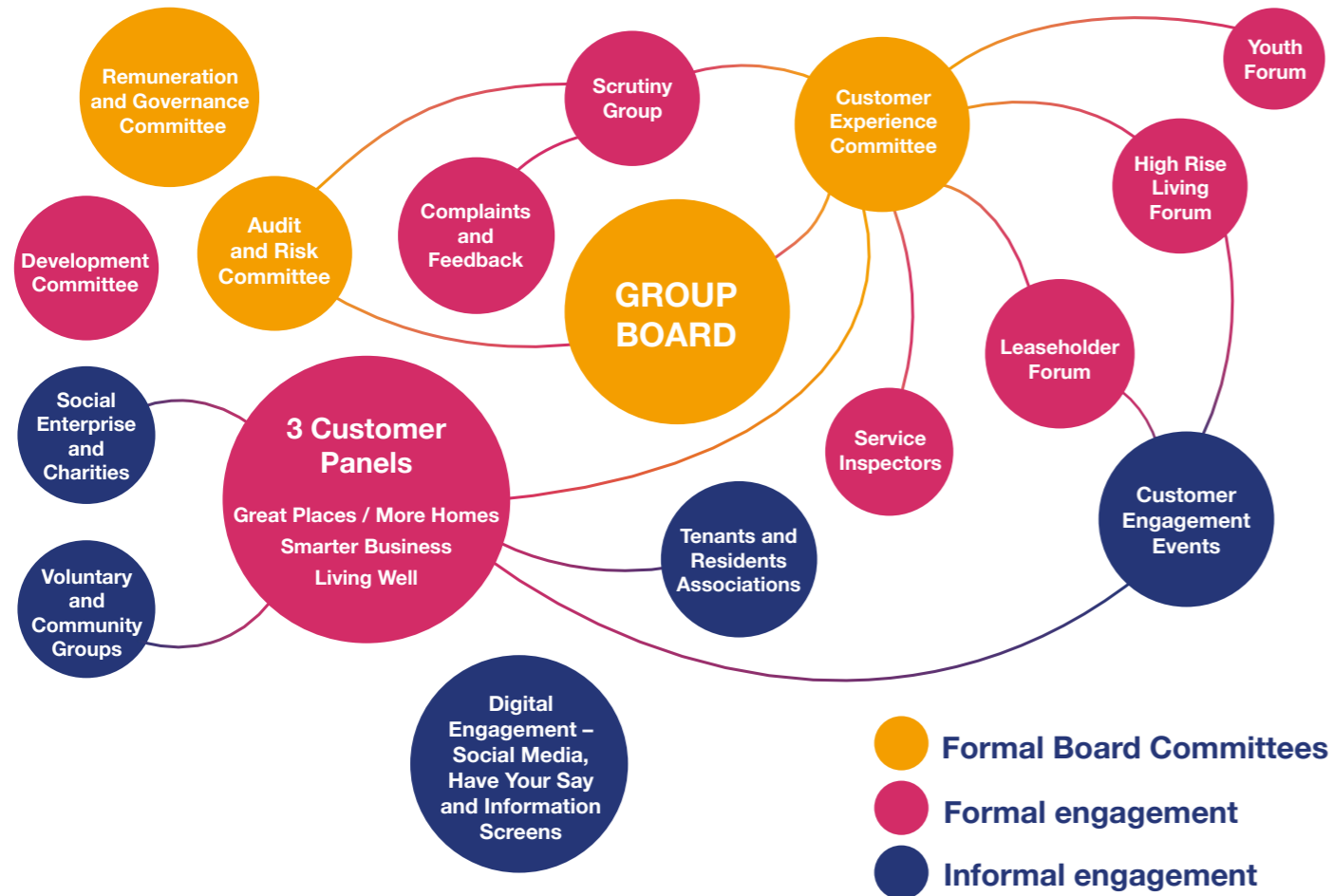
- The lack of bungalows
- When their issues don't get resolved first time
- Have a hard time using technology

Internet use:



Comms preference:





Our customer insight work is enhanced by our diverse and well developed network of involved customers and volunteers. Thanks to both formal and informal engagement, as well as governance structures, our involved customers scrutinise performance, influence policies,

contribute to strategic priorities, agree service standards, inspect services and help improve services.

This diverse network is called our Customer Engagement Universe. The image above shows how the work of the Board and its committees links with our formal and

informal customer engagement structures. Key to this is the role of the influential Customer Experience Committee. This is a relatively new formal committee made up of Board members, tenants, leaseholders and community membership.

You'll find more details about what customers, other Wythenshawe people and community partners are saying to us in Appendix B. These conversations have shaped the development of our plan, in particular the following two major engagement projects:

- ✓ Across summer 2022, nearly 2,000 Wythenshawe residents took part in a community consultation exercise, both online and through face-to-face 'Communitree' events
- ✓ In August 2022, 1,880 customers, shared owners and leaseholders took part in a survey via telephone and online

In spring 2023 we commissioned an external consultant to produce a research report based on the 2021 Census. We did this as we want to fully understand how our customer base and the broader Wythenshawe community has developed over the last ten years, and how this may alter through specific drivers of change over the next ten years.

The report's findings are informing the ongoing development of this and future plans. It is also ensuring our strategies, actions and resources continue to be effectively and efficiently targeted because they are based on robust evidence. More information is given in Appendix H.



Communitree Engagement Event

THE CONTEXT OF OUR CORPORATE PLAN

The importance of purpose in addressing challenges faced by the social housing sector

The first recommendation in The Better Social Housing Review (released in December 2022) was that

‘Every housing association, and the sector as a whole, should refocus on their core purpose and deliver against it’.

In support, the Chair of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has requested social housing landlords focus on their two fundamental roles – to provide safe, well-maintained homes for their customers, and to ensure more social homes for people who need them.

There has been huge media coverage following the Coroner’s ruling that two-year-old Awaab Ishak died from a respiratory condition caused by exposure to mould in a home managed by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH). This tarnished the sector’s reputation, and especially resonated with Greater Manchester Registered Providers, including both RBH and WCHG as members.

The Social Housing Regulation Bill has been passed through Parliament. It has introduced a number of measures to give customers greater powers, improve access to swift and fair redress, and enhance the powers of the RSH.

Colleagues at one of our business transformation workshops



The objectives set out in our plan aim to deliver both the **‘good quality homes and services’**

and the

‘safer, healthier communities’

aspects of our purpose.

We recognise that to meet sector-wide challenges, we need to accelerate our pace on improving the quality of our homes and services.

This is why over the next three years our priorities are expressed as delivering **‘Brilliant Basics’**. This will see us delivering high quality, responsive customer services, supported by the right infrastructure and support services. We will achieve all this by bringing together colleagues from across the business to collaborate in our transformation **‘Change Wyth Us’** project teams.

Dan and Jacob, Wythenshawe residents



Our financial performance

Our plan builds on two years of financial management with a focus on improving our key financial metrics to strengthen our financial capacity. We aim to deliver financial performance that is competitive, or better, compared to our peers in the north west and wider sector.

We are in a financially strong and stable position, demonstrating both financial resilience and future borrowing capacity (see table of VFM metrics on page 25). Our operating margins are healthy, albeit some way below the top quarter of what could be achieved.

In common with the rest of the sector, our financial capacity is challenged by the inflationary pressures experienced in our cost base for 2022 and 2023. The cost of living crisis impacts even more acutely on our customers, notably in energy and food cost inflation. This is reflected in the additional financial and other support measures we put in place in 2022/23 and 2023/24, some of which we anticipate will continue to be needed throughout the life of our plan.

The Government’s 7% rent cap for 2023/24 reduced financial capacity in our 30-

year business plan, as it did for all social landlords. Despite this, we continue our financial strategy of making it a priority to invest in the services we deliver to customers, and as far as possible avoid implementing any actions that adversely impact customers and communities.

This is why we have released additional financial capacity in 2022-23 to address the additional demand on repairs from our customers and from rising legislative and regulatory standards. We are also continuing to prioritise investment in improving the

condition of our property portfolio, especially with regards to building safety. This approach provides a better customer experience, minimises health and safety risks, and provides value for money over the longer term. As a result, current and future operating margins are likely to be tighter.

The Group continues to comply with the RSH governance and viability standards, with the highest grades for governance and viability (G1, V1) confirmed in July 2023. An In-Depth Assessment (IDA) of the Group by the RSH took place in March and April 2023. The process for us also included being a pilot for the Consumer Standards.

Lessons learned and actions required from the IDA will be reflected in a review of our plan later in 2023.

One of the new kitchens from our kitchen renewal programme



GOVERNMENT
RENT CAP

10+% increase in
operational costs



G1, V1 CONFIRMED
IN JULY 2023

Governance and Viability



Appendix D is a financial synopsis of the Group’s position. It includes our 30-year business plan, stress testing, value for money ratios and our funding structure. A summary of our recent financial performance and key ratios is shown below:

Business Metrics 2022-23



Turnover
£70m
£71.8m (2021-22)



Owned homes
13,694
13,714 (2021-22)



EBITDA MRI¹
108.6%
261.3% (2021-22)



Operating margin
15.2%
19.3% (2021-22)



Gearing²
20.9%
20.7% (2021-22)



Headline social housing costs
£4,579 per unit
£3,658 (2021-22)

- 1. EBITDA - Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortisation, a standard of measurement banks use to judge a company’s performance.
- 2. Gearing - the ratio of a company’s debt to equity, measuring a company’s financial leverage.

In comparison to our North West peers, our Value for Money metrics show an improving position at the end of 2021-22 as shown in the table below. More information is in the Group Financial Statements available on our website (link below).

Regulator of Social Housing and Value for Money indicator	WCHG 2022-23	WCHG 2021-22	Peer Group Avg. 2021-22
Operating margin (overall) %	15.2%	19.3%	17.5%
Operating margin (social housing) %	14.5%	20.7%	20.1%
EBITDA-MRI %	108.6%	261.3%	128.6%
New supply delivered (social) %	0.27%	0.34%	0.95%
New supply delivered (non-social) %	0.07%	0.12%	0.09%
Gearing %	20.9%	20.7%	38.5%
Reinvestment %	7.5%	5.5%	9%
Return on capital employed	3.9%	4.5%	3.6%
Headline social housing cost per unit	£4,579	£3,658	£3,961

● Better / ● Worse than peer group

Further reading:

- ✓ Annual reports and publications: www.wchg.org.uk/our-publications/
- ✓ Financial statements: www.wchg.org.uk/financial-statements/

Risk management

THE IMPORTANCE OF RISK AND STRATEGY

The key pillars in ensuring we achieve our purpose include effective risk management and a properly resourced and achievable corporate strategy. Our risk management systems ensure the Board’s Strategic Risk Register reflects the most significant risks that may impact on the delivery of our plan’s objectives. The governance of risk, including the role of the Audit and Risk Committee, provides the Board with the assurance that strategic risks are being effectively managed.

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

All our plan objectives are mapped to risks in the Strategic Risk Register (Appendix G). The controls and mitigating actions for each risk makes sure the level of risk is managed to an acceptable level. Key forms of assurance on the effectiveness of risk controls are also detailed in the Risk Management System.

Our Board regularly look at the most significant strategic risks that could impact on business viability, service delivery, reputation, etc. and so derail the delivery of our plan. The Audit and Risk Committee and Group Leadership Team view the remainder of the strategic risks.



OUR RISK APPETITE

The Board have determined risk appetites for a comprehensive range of risk drivers as set out below:

RISK APPETITE				
Averse	Minimal	Cautious	Open	Hungry
Health and Safety		Reputation	Merger	Value for Money
Governance and Regulatory Compliance		Finance and Treasury	Diversification	Community Development
			Transformation	
			People and Culture	
			Investment Development	
			Technology	
			Carbon Reduction	



Mohamad Qureshi,
Community Development
Co-ordinator

The objectives of our plan align with our risk appetite. The objectives covering asset and property services, customer safety and wellbeing, and the provision of services to tenants and leaseholders, are risk averse. A key focus is to ensure regulatory compliance continues to be achieved, and RSH Standards and Consumer Standards (when introduced) are met. Another focus is that customers are listened to, and their views influence the services we provide.

Plan objectives for which we may wish to accept a higher level of risk include development, technology, people and culture, value for money and carbon reduction. For these objectives we will ensure an acceptable level of reward is achieved for the risk accepted, and put controls in place to manage these risks.

The Board are open to diversification and mergers. We already have a modest portfolio of market rent homes and a small number of other tactical investments (such as in the Greater Manchester Joint Venture and Hive Homes). In all cases, the aim is to generate risk-adjusted returns to the Group in excess of the cost of capital.

The Board have agreed that although we are open to mergers in order to better deliver our purpose, at the current time there is no imperative to actively seek a merger partner. This position will continue to be reviewed throughout the life of our plan in the light of changing circumstances, including any potential opportunities that may arise.



Village 135 independent living scheme (left), and homes on Bideford Drive (right)



Garden City Homes

The simplicity of our Group's structure limits our inherent strategic risk. The majority of trading and investment activity flows in and out of the parent company WCHG. Two subsidiaries – Garden City Design and Build, and Garden City Trading – support the cost-effective development of new open market homes

for sale. Their work, and the Garden City brand, are important, but their contribution to the Group's overall trading activity will continue to be modest, and their activities will carry on being overseen by their Boards within the overall Group governance structure.



200 NEW HOMES PER YEAR

with a pipeline of 1000 new homes



Dance class at Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre

THE GOLDEN THREAD – FROM PURPOSE TO ACTION

Our plan has a coherent golden thread running from our purpose through to all of the supporting levels. In this way, we ensure its detailed objectives, actions and service delivery outcomes will help us achieve our purpose.

‘To provide good quality homes and services to our tenants and leaseholders and to play a leading role in creating safer, healthier communities’.



Helen Hardie,
Domestic Assistant

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Board have agreed nine guiding principles that support the delivery of our purpose. These help colleagues prioritise competing resources and actions, and in doing so improve the selection and delivery of our plan’s strategies and actions. These guiding principles cover three areas – the impact of what we do, supporting how we work, and effective strategy implementation.

- ✓ Put our customers first
- ✓ Respect the diverse needs of our customers
- ✓ Develop and support our community directly and through partnership
- ✓ Be a leading custodian of Wythenshawe’s green spaces in line with its ‘Garden City’ heritage
- ✓ Invest in homes and reduce our carbon footprint
- ✓ Balance the interests of current and future generations
- ✓ Invest in an inclusive colleague team
- ✓ Be financially resilient and strong
- ✓ Have a business head and a social heart

OUR VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

Our Board approved a new set of organisational values in 2022. Each value is supported by expected behaviours so colleagues are clear on how to bring these values to life in their day-to-day work. The values and behaviours were launched with colleagues in September 2022.

Further colleague training designed to embed a ‘customer first’ service

culture has been rolled out in early 2023. This uses the globally recognised MGI learning programme and gives colleagues the skills and tools they need to drive a strong customer focus at all times.



OUR VALUES ARE:

We are **one team**
inclusive, supportive and collaborative



We act with **integrity**
trusted, reliable and respectful



We support **aspiration**
for colleagues, customers and the community



We are **courageous**
willing to challenge and change to improve and innovate



We are **practical**
resourceful, pragmatic and prudent



You can read more about the golden thread in practice in the following:

- ✓ ‘Strategic themes and objectives’ – More Homes, Living Well, Great Places, Smarter Business, Carbon Reduction, Value for Money and our primary plan objectives
 - ✓ Appendix I – Business transformation and the target operating model
- ✓ Detailed policies, plans, actions and service delivery targets and measures – each Executive Director manages a suite of these for their strategic theme. Together, the Group Leadership Team are accountable to the Board for policy compliance and delivering against agreed targets and measures

STRATEGIC THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

How we’re going to maximise opportunities and effectively manage challenges

The building blocks of our plan are the four strategic themes developed for the 2020-22 Corporate Plan. This is because our Board recognises that overcoming the big underlying challenges summarised below should continue to be our most important priorities and remain at the heart of what we will deliver in the 2023-26 period:

- ✓ Insufficient new affordable homes to meet demand across Wythenshawe and the region (More Homes)
 - ✓ Increasing demand from customers and communities for support goes beyond the core housing management service (Living Well)
- ✓ Higher building safety and other property standards, plus increasing demand from customers to maintain and improve their homes and invest in the Garden City environment of Wythenshawe (Great Places)
- ✓ An evidenced need to invest in the people, skills, culture, technology, systems, processes and business infrastructure to meet increasing expectations from customers, communities, partners, colleagues and other stakeholders, and retain our financial robustness (Smarter Business)



Fridha, Freya and Faina Mathew at an Active Streets event

The first three strategic themes flow from our customers, communities and Wythenshawe specific factors. The fourth theme (Smarter Business) flows from our systems thinking service analysis work, our engagement with colleagues, and listening to customer service delivery expectations.

A strategic theme development in our plan is a more explicit focus on the cross-cutting themes of Carbon Reduction and Value for Money. Successful delivery of these ‘cross cutters’ requires collaboration across teams working on two or more of the other four themes.



In September 2020, the Regulator of Social Housing established a set of standards for landlords to request tenants’ ratings of their performance, known as Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). In response, WCHG conducted a baseline TSM survey in October 2022. The survey results have influenced many of the objectives in our plan.

The January 2023 Housemark Report introduced benchmarks for TSMs, referred to as TSM indicators. We will use these indicators to assess our performance and the success

of our plan. Our goal is to achieve a mid-level ranking in these indicators. When our performance surpasses the mid-level, we will target the upper quartile.

Our ultimate aim is to achieve upper quartile performance across all indicators, but initially, we must establish ‘**Brilliant Basics**’.

We will regularly review our plan’s objectives and indicators to ensure we address any shifts in sector benchmarks, best practices, and recommended areas of focus.



LIVING WELL



Theme Lead:
Paul Seymour
Executive Director of
Customers and Communities

*Rawtee Maharaj, Fresh Start Smart
(top left) and Erica Thompson,
Brooklands TARA (bottom right)*

By listening to our customers and other Wythenshawe residents, we know which of the services we and our partners provide are most important to them. We also know what matters most in terms of how we deliver our services, as well as how we support and promote the community and place of Wythenshawe. This is why our focus over the lifetime of our plan is to provide a brilliant service and improve the customer experience.

The feedback we get comes from many different customer and resident engagement channels. These include our formal resident engagement approaches (our Customer Engagement Universe), informal engagements such as colleagues attending the numerous locality-based Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs), the 2023 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), and the large scale Communitree engagement we held over autumn 2022.



CHANGE WYTH US TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

We will work with customers to improve our services through the **‘Brilliant Basics’** priorities. Our Living Well focus aims to achieve:

- ✓ Improve the customer experience
- ✓ Engage, listen and respond to what customers are saying
- ✓ Improve our ‘right first time’ approach for customers
- ✓ Improve our customer communication
- ✓ Understand the diversity of our many customer groups and segments
- ✓ Make it easier for customers to access services

✓ Focus on empowering customers, residents and communities to prosper and thrive in Wythenshawe

OUR APPROACH OF DELIVERING GREAT SERVICES

We aim to provide:

- ✓ Community services through three community centres
- ✓ Youth and play services in partnership with MCC
- ✓ A community safety service using Assure24 (WCHG) in partnership with GMP
- ✓ Digital inclusion training
- ✓ Employment support and skills training

PARTICULAR OUTCOMES

We aim to:

- ✓ Support and empower the community directly and indirectly through our LIFE model approach (Lead, Influence, Follow, Exit)
- ✓ Develop and implement our Living and Ageing Well Strategy. This will be person centred and aims to enable independence for our customers through the homes we provide and the types of support we or others provide
- ✓ Address anti-social behaviour and its causes



Geraldine Wheeldon,
Village 135 resident

MAIN OBJECTIVES AND METRICS:

Category	Objective	Metric	Target
Community Safety	We will respond effectively to prevent and address the impact of anti-social behaviour experienced by our customers and residents	TSM TP12 – WCHG’s approach to handling anti-social behaviour	TSM median quartile (Housemark benchmark data)
Customer and Community Voices	We will empower customers, residents and communities across Wythenshawe to thrive by providing support, services and community assets	TSM TP11 – WCHG makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood	TSM upper quartile (Housemark benchmark data)
		TSM TP05 – Listens to views and acts upon them	
Living and Ageing Well	We will develop and deliver a Living and Ageing Well Strategy that provides services and homes in partnership with others in ways that enable independence and wellbeing for our customers	We will use the four wellbeing questions from the Office for National Statistics (ONS)	None until baseline established
Service Delivery	We will understand the diverse needs of our customers and deliver services that improve their customer experience and satisfaction	TSM TP01 – Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services provided by WCHG?	TSM median quartile (Housemark benchmark data)
		TSM TP09 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with WCHG’s approach to complaint handling?	TSM median quartile (Housemark benchmark data)



GREAT PLACES



Theme Lead:
Paul Butterworth
Executive Director of Assets

Our challenge and focus during the life of our plan is to deliver responsive and planned investment programmes that improve the quality and safety of our homes for customers.

Our approach will balance the financial capacity of our business, rising standards and regulations, alongside rising customer demand for our services. This will remain the leading priority for the investment of resources as set

out in our Asset Management Strategy.

We know the importance of having great data and have prioritised the strengthening of our systems and processes to gather high-quality asset information. This will allow us to improve strategic and operational insights, as well as guide how we prioritise investment choices to maximise the benefit for our customers.

Improving our insights into assets, together with a significant allocation of our finances, will make sure we continue to improve the safety and energy efficiency of our homes. This includes embedding the building and fire safety agenda, as well as completing a significant investment package across our homes.

We know one of our customers’ highest priorities is routinely receiving a good repairs and maintenance (R&M) service. The projects we deliver throughout our plan will build on our existing ways of working, but with an even stronger focus on improving access, communication and the quality of our R&M services across all homes. This is supported by our healthy finances which will allow us to continue directing resources to our R&M service in response to changing customer demands.



MAIN OBJECTIVES AND METRICS:

Category	Objective	Metric	Target
Asset Management	Deliver and embed high quality asset appraisal data which provides intelligence and insight to inform wider business decisions that positively impact customers and optimise value for money	>95% of stock surveys less than 5 years old	85% by March 2024 90% by March 2025 95% by March 2026
Building Safety and Compliance	Customers in our blocks will be able to access current asset information, providing confidence in the safety and compliance of their homes whilst maintaining our excellent safety standards within an evolving regulatory framework	TSM TP04 – Satisfaction the home is well maintained and safe to live in	TSM median quartile (Housemark benchmark data)
Repairs and Maintenance	We will improve and maximise the value, quality, and customer experience delivered through our proactive Repairs and Maintenance services	TSM TP02 – Satisfaction with repairs	TSM median quartile (Housemark benchmark data)

Craig Wilson, Grounds Maintenance Operative



MORE HOMES



Theme Lead:
Andrea Lowman
Executive Director
of Development

We continue to have huge demand for all our homes. In fact, the current need for housing cannot be met by the homes we have available. For example, in 2021/22 we housed around **500** new households, while we had over **160,000** bids.

We invest part of our finances every year into building new homes to help reduce the impact of the housing crisis in Wythenshawe and neighbouring areas, as well as to help deliver MCC's Housing Strategy. In this way, we make the most of our position as a strategic partner and continue to create sustainable communities that add social and financial value over the long term.

Developing new homes also replaces the income we lose from the homes that are sold (c40-60 p.a.) under Right to Buy and Right to Acquire. This in turn is used to support our efficiency as a business and the services we deliver.

We have a healthy development plan in progress (currently c870 new homes up to March 2023)

and aim to increase our building of new homes in Wythenshawe and neighbouring areas. Our approximate target for housing types is 70% social or affordable rent, 30% shared ownership and open market sale.

There is strong competition amongst developers and other RPs to develop new homes in Wythenshawe. This reflects the consistently buoyant housing market in recent years and the relative affordability of housing in Wythenshawe compared to neighbouring areas. One of the main things that makes us an attractive partner is the scale of our local services and our community investment capabilities, together with our robust finances. We are also working towards all our new homes being low or zero carbon. This supports us in achieving our carbon reduction journey and

in making the homes we provide more efficient to run for our customers.

An exciting opportunity that will come to life as part of our plan is the MCC-led regeneration of Wythenshawe Civic Centre. Our hope is to be a significant development and community partner with MCC in this long-term project.

We work with our housing and assets colleagues to make sure we address the opportunities and challenges of homes which no longer provide suitable accommodation for our customers and are uneconomic for us to invest in over the longer term. For both the building of new homes and updating of existing ones, we invest in areas that are a priority for our strategic partners, especially Manchester City Council, so our work complements their strategic housing and regeneration plans.

Apprentices at our newest development, Green Acre

MAIN OBJECTIVES AND METRICS:

Category	Objective	Metric	Target
Growth	We will build or acquire more quality homes and develop a larger pipeline of new homes to meet demand across a range of tenures	Minimum of 200 new homes per annum, with pipeline of 1,000 homes with a 70/30 rent/sale tenure mix	
Partnerships	WCHG will be a key strategic development and regeneration partner of choice across our key priority areas	Number of new partnerships established	N/A





SMARTER BUSINESS



Theme Lead:

Shahida Latif-Haider

Executive Director of
Transformation and Resources

Our current operating model is based on organisational functions. We recognise this has its limits. In particular, it can help create disconnected decision making, silo working and inefficiencies. For example, where data is not used to its

full potential across different functions and services.

We have made progress in recent years to reduce silo working, but this remains an ongoing cultural and practical challenge. The biggest problem is our technology and systems, which in many cases do not allow colleagues to gain a complete overview of activities, customers and workflows across teams. This is frustrating for both colleagues and customers, as well as inefficient.

We are determined to overcome these problems so the Group remains strong and competitive over the

long-term, with the infrastructure needed to meet the increasingly diverse and complex demands of our customers and communities. This is why the three main areas we focus on in our plan, in the 'Brilliant Basics' phase, for Smarter Business, are culture, data, and technology and systems. Together, these are the building blocks of our new operating model and provide the structure for how we want to work in the future to deliver the services that add most value to our customers.

*Janette Taylor, Living Well
Co-ordinator and Sophia
Begum, Key Worker (Motiv8)*



Achieving solid foundations in these areas through the objectives outlined below will help us move towards a business which is 'fitter, flatter and faster'. By this we mean making sure we focus on doing the things that matter most to customers so we:

✓ Deliver services more efficiently (fitter)

✓ Reduce wasted work across our systems and processes, and empower colleagues to take decisions closer to the customer (flatter)

✓ Implement new systems and ways of working more quickly to provide customers with the services that matter most to them (faster)

Expected results include improved colleague productivity, customer satisfaction and value for money, together with greater internal talent development and lower levels of colleague turnover.

MAIN OBJECTIVES AND METRICS:

Category	Objective	Metric	Target
Culture and People	We will be an employer of choice, supporting our colleagues to develop into a values-led, diverse workforce of the future, capable of innovating and adapting to changes in ways we work	Colleague Net Promoter Score	To maintain a positive score greater than +15
Data	We will have reliable, clean data held in a single source, which is then used to drive customer insight and confident colleague decision making	% completion of 3-year data quality programme	33% per annum 100% by March 2026
Technology and Systems	We will provide adaptable, efficient technology tools and digital capability, to enhance the experience and productivity for customers and colleagues	Annual colleague survey – 'Technology – The equipment and systems I use help me to do the best job I can at work'	75% satisfaction



VALUE FOR MONEY



Theme Lead:
Simon Morris
Executive Director of Finance

We are in a strong financial position with the capacity to confidently deliver the objectives of our plan. This means we continue to stay compliant with the RSH's economic standards throughout our thirty-year business plan. We are very aware of the challenges to our, and the sector's, financial capacity in the current

operating environment. From a financial perspective, the sub-inflation 7% rent increase from 1 April 2023 has a negative impact on our long-term capacity. Also, high inflation in the short term increases our costs, and combined with increased customer demand for property repairs and other services, puts pressure on our operating margins.

We are prepared to accept a softening in our margins over the short term for three reasons.

Firstly, we want to meet additional customer demand and manage service satisfaction as fully as possible. Secondly, we want to ensure property standards are maintained across our homes while minimising health and safety risks. Thirdly, we have a strong interest cover position, we are very good at generating cash and we have a relatively small proportion of debt against our equity. All this means our finances, as a whole, are healthy.



Helina, Tenant

Our sector has attracted significant criticism in recent months, mainly due to the failure of some organisations to address property condition issues to the disadvantage of their tenant's health and safety. We recognise with an average property age of approx. 70 years, we must continue to stay on top of property disrepair and building safety issues.

This is a key reason we are putting investment into planned and responsive repair programmes above increasing our operating margins. Our Board continue to ensure strong control over this area, recognising the significant risks to tenant health and safety, our risk averse appetite on health and safety, and the dangers to our good reputation. The WCHG governance structure is detailed in Appendix F.

The financially challenging way we work, together with our commitment to customers and communities, means we must prove to customers and stakeholders that we deliver value for money across



Alex Milner, Multi-Skilled Technician (Plumber)

everything we do. Value for money is a vital part of the Board's 'business head, social heart' guiding principle which is understood across the business as

'We will run our business efficiently and effectively and we will review all our services to ensure we deliver value for money in everything we do. This will maximise the resources we can invest in providing good quality, good value services for current and future tenants, leaseholders and their communities.'

Guided by a clear organisational purpose and supporting principles, we will continue to allocate resources across competing priorities in order to achieve the very best balance between current and future service delivery, and financial capacity. Engagement with customers, colleagues and, where appropriate, other stakeholders, is one of the key ways we make sure the decisions we take are robust, e.g. in our service reviews.

VALUE FOR MONEY (VFM) STRATEGY

There are four desired outcomes:

Delivering tangible cash benefits

We will achieve this through service reviews and business transformation as well as significant projects such as the review of service charges to assess income improvements in a fair and transparent manner, and the implementation of procurement strategy savings.

Optimising the impact of our social investment

We continue to review our funding of social and community investment activities to ensure we balance what is most important to customers and the community, with what is affordable to the business. The views of customers and community partners are essential in making these decisions.

Invest to save

Historic underinvestment in certain areas of the business means we need to increase our infrastructure investment – for example in new IT systems – to support delivery of future improvements and efficiencies, as well as meet customer and colleague expectations throughout our plan and beyond.

Regulatory compliance

Delivering our VfM strategy will ensure we comply with the RSH's value for money standard and help us in meeting future VfM targets set for the RSH's value for money metrics (see Appendix D).

MAIN OBJECTIVES AND METRICS:

Category	Objective	Metric	Target
Viability and Governance	We will remain financially resilient and well-governed in order to meet our short, medium, and long-term obligations and resource delivery of our plan objectives	Retain compliance with the RSH regulatory standards for governance, viability and (when introduced) consumer standards Maintain compliance with the Board's Golden Rules and all Funder Loan Covenants	G1, V1 (with equivalent consumer rating) Golden Rule Interest Cover min. 150% Gearing max. 40% Funder Covenant Interest Cover min. 110% Gearing max. 55%
Customer and Colleague Influence	We will seek to optimise value for money through all our activities and using the influence of both customers, colleagues and, where appropriate, other partners	Achieve business plan targets on Board's value for money metrics	Value for money metric extracted from 2023 business plan (see Appendix D)





CARBON REDUCTION



Theme Leads:

Andrea Lowman

Executive Director of Development

Paul Butterworth

Executive Director of Assets

Our Carbon Reduction Strategy ensures we partner with other Greater Manchester RPs and MCC to reduce our reliance on carbon, making Wythenshawe even greener.

Our focus will be on actions to achieve current and future national legislation and policy. Delivering our strategy has the commitment of our Board and Group Leadership Team to ensure there is collaboration across teams with the ownership of actions spread across the Group.

The delivery of activities is supported by financial investment embedded in our 30-year business plan and through the shorter-term planning of services and budgeting.

MAIN OBJECTIVES AND METRICS:

Category	Objective	Metric	Target
Existing Homes	We will manage the choices, tensions and trade-offs needed to meet our decarbonisation aspirations and improve affordability to tenants across the property portfolio	Percentage of properties with at least SAP Level C	79% by March 2024 84% by March 2025 90% by March 2026
New Homes	We will build new homes using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) to help our carbon reduction journey	10% of new homes built in the three-year period to March 2026 will use Modern Methods of Construction	
Organisational Impact	Reduce the carbon emissions across all areas of the Group's activities	Carbon emissions will be measured annually, reported to Board and actions/ investment put in place to reduce emissions	

OUR COLLEAGUES

Everything we achieve for our customers, communities and partners is only possible thanks to the commitment and professionalism of our fantastic colleagues. Our People Strategy is based on six people pillars, each with an underlying plan of activity. This strategy helps us deliver our purpose, and alongside our values will enable us to achieve our People Vision, which is

‘To develop a stimulating working environment that supports the capacity and motivation of all colleagues to fulfil their role to the best of their ability and potential.’

We are proud to be creating an inclusive culture that embeds and reflects our values at all levels of our business. As discussed in ‘The golden thread – from purpose to

action’, the Board approved a new set of organisational values in 2022, which were launched to colleagues in the autumn of that year. These are at the heart of how we deliver our purpose. They inform and guide our work and play a key role in helping us to successfully deliver high-quality services for our customers, colleagues and the community. On top of all this, they help make WCHG a great, inclusive place to work.

Colleagues volunteering to transform Moroccan Gardens (left) and colleagues enjoying lunch at Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre (right)



OUR CULTURE

As the largest Manchester-based housing association, we recognise the role we have as a major local employer. 42% of our colleagues live in the local M22/M23 postcode area, and 20% are also our customers. This reflects the importance to us of providing employment opportunities for local people, including our customers. We also continue to have an active apprenticeship programme to grow local talent.

The high number of colleagues who either live locally or are our customers is a distinctive feature of our operating model and gives us a real competitive advantage. Throughout our organisation there is a depth and breadth of understanding about what is going on across Wythenshawe, about the current and emerging issues,

and crucially, about the realities of daily life experienced by our customers and local people. All of this helps improve the agility and focus of the services we provide. For more information about our colleagues and our culture see Appendix C online.



Women in Trades coffee morning



Colleagues volunteering at a charity truck pull for BW3

DOING THE RIGHT THINGS FOR OUR CUSTOMERS, COMMUNITIES, COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS

The three years of this plan will see us deliver significant improvements for our customers, communities, colleagues and partners. By listening to our different stakeholders we will be able to understand their needs and channel that knowledge into ensuring we do the right things for them. Through our business transformation programme we will lay the strong foundations for the future of our business and Wythenshawe.



Understand our customers better



Supporting our customers to live well



Higher service standard



Simpler processes



Greener future



Better homes



Community cohesion



Continue to be a great place to work



Enhanced digital experience



Stronger partnerships



New homes



Over 50's group at Benchill Community Centre



CONTACT US

t: **0800 633 5500**

Free from most phones

t: **0300 111 0000**

Local rate or included in free minutes

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*Sam Schofield, Sales and
Lettings Aftercare Assistant*

