

# A BRIGHTER TOMORROW





**IT'S BEEN QUITE A JOURNEY...**

### **1999**

Formation of Willow Park Housing Trust and the start of a £185 million investment programme.

### **2000**

CCTV control system goes live.  
The first step in reducing crime in East Wythenshawe.

### **2001**

In-house Building Services Team created.  
The Trust completed its 10,000<sup>th</sup> home improvement.

### **2002**

The introduction of Neighbourhood Wardens,  
now an award-winning service.

### **2003**

The first new build homes were completed at Willow Brook Gardens  
providing 28 bungalows for elderly people.

### **2004**

Woodhouse Park and Moss Nook joined Willow Park.  
Improvement works are ongoing and ahead of schedule.

### **2005**

Business Enterprise Support Project launched.  
It has since helped create 100 new businesses.

### **2006**

Benchill Community Centre and Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre open their doors.  
2,000 people of all ages now visit them each week.

### **2007**

Willow Park wins the Housing Corporation Gold Award  
for its work in empowering communities.

### **2008**

The Trust achieves top 25% quartile  
in national performance indicators for almost all our services.

### **2009**

As part of a stock rationalisation strategy  
120 homes were transferred from Guinness Northern Counties to Willow Park.

# 10 years have made a real difference...

What a fantastic journey it's been so far!

There have been significant changes and improvements to all the neighbourhoods Willow Park manage.

From the 6,600 homes in East Wythenshawe we began with in 1999 through to the 2,300 homes in Woodhouse Park and Moss Nook that came under our care in 2004, there's been a continual change for the better. The recent addition of the 120 homes from Guinness Northern Counties has been another fantastic opportunity and the community are already seeing positive improvements.

The journey continues... with the generous support and amazing involvement of our tenants, partners, staff and community, we are committed to continuing and building on the improvements of the last ten years.

Our vision remains unchanged.

**To create a place where people want to live and work,  
where residents are proud of their homes and their community.**

**A BRIGHTER TOMORROW.**



Eddy Newman  
Chair of the Board



Joe Doherty  
Chief Executive





**“They can’t  
do enough for me...”**

**...I love my kitchen and bathroom.  
I’m over the moon - can’t fault them!”**

# on the home front...



**When Willow Park took over the ownership and management of homes from Manchester City Council it inherited one of the largest concentrations of council housing in the country.**



We saw this as a real opportunity to drastically improve homes. We wanted to get the basics in place: efficient double glazing and central heating and good quality kitchens and bathrooms. The essentials in a modern home.

The improvement programme began immediately and between 1999 and 2009, the Trust, working closely with residents and partners, has invested over £185 million.

We’ve improved homes, built new ones and are continually working to improve the environment and open spaces. We also provide essential facilities that improve the lives of our residents such as Benchill Community Centre and Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre.

While this has been a massive undertaking we have kept all our promises to tenants. We will continue to invest in homes and the environment and improve the quality of life for everyone.





**“There are loads  
of things going on...  
...there are plenty of things to do.”**

Improving our properties was always a priority but our vision goes further than that. We continue to play a major role in making our neighbourhoods better places to live.

#### Keeping it safe

Community safety has always been one of the main concerns of residents, so tackling anti-social behaviour is a top priority.

- Our CCTV control system was launched in 2000.
- The Community Safety team now includes a neighbourhood warden system, 24/7 CCTV surveillance and concierge service.
- Our specialist housing team has an award-winning partnership with Greater Manchester Police and Manchester City Council.

#### Keeping it centred

In 2006, with the official opening of Benchill Community Centre and Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre, the Trust provided state-of-the-art opportunities for both young and old in the heart of the community. 2,000 people now use the centres each week.

- Our much loved community facilities are run by local people for local people and offer an exciting range of physical, social and educational activities.



# the bigger picture

#### Keeping it local

Improving the job and career prospects of local people was clearly vital as our neighbourhood had some of the highest unemployment levels in Manchester.

- Our Business Enterprise Support Project has helped create almost 100 new businesses including the successful 'Kidz Come 1<sup>st</sup>' after school club at Benchill Community Centre.
- An inspirational partnership with The Manchester College (formerly MANCAT) has created a construction skills centre providing training opportunities for local people.
- We provide apprenticeships and trainee positions and over 30% of the Trust's workforce is local.
- We work closely with local businesses to provide work placements, internships and mentoring support to local schools.





**“They’ve made such a difference!**

**It makes you feel better because the area is so much better. People look at you and smile instead of looking down-hearted.”**

# we didn't do it alone

**A big thank you to the many organisations and partners who have helped us achieve so much over the past ten years.**

Their support and involvement in Willow Park's progress has been much appreciated and valued.

#### Community Partners

The transformation of Wythenshawe over the past 10 years has been brought about by close working partnerships.

Here are just a few key partners who have helped us bring about real change:

- Manchester City Council and the Wythenshawe Regeneration Team.
- The Manchester College.
- Greater Manchester Police and Fire Service.
- Tenant Services Authority.
- Homes and Communities Agency.
- National Housing Federation.
- South Manchester Primary Care Trust.



The companies below have kindly supported the production of this publication.



# the future's looking bright

It has always been our vision to create a place where people want to live and work - where residents can be proud of their homes and community and contribute to a real improvement in their quality of life.

Willow Park has achieved much with the help of its residents, partners and colleagues. But we're not complacent. We will continue to work hard to ensure that Wythenshawe and its people continue on an upward spiral.

#### Regenerate

We will continue to extend the range of regeneration activities and develop our work in education and skills, economic developments and worklessness, social and financial inclusion, support families and young people and improve the public realm.

#### Develop and grow

We will provide more homes and more services where we can bring real benefits to tenants and residents.

#### Improve performance

We will continue to improve our performance and are now in the top 25% of housing associations for almost all our services and are aspiring to be in the top 10%.

We aim to be recognised as a model for successful housing and neighbourhood regeneration and one of the best places to work.



“Our community’s  
blooming again...”

### We'll leave the last word to our tenants

“ We are writing to say thank you so very much.

We have been council tenants for 40 years and have to say that the last 10 years with Willow Park have been a joy.

All staff are excellent, polite and hard working and we feel we have very good people to look after our flat and the area.

One example - I emailed about a small problem on Easter Monday and this morning, Tuesday, Annie rang at 10am telling me somebody will be around today.

Wow, what a service, you have improved our home over the years and we want to thank you for all your efforts and hard work.

Many, many thanks and well done! ”

Bob & Olga Rigby



Winners of our Gold Factor Community Awards





### Willow Park Housing Trust

Willow Park House  
Hollyhedge Road  
Wythenshawe  
Manchester  
M22 9UF

Tel: +44 (0)161 946 9500  
Fax: +44 (0)161 946 9507

[www.willow-park.co.uk](http://www.willow-park.co.uk)  
**0800 633 5500**

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## Real lives. Wythenshawe

Wythenshawe is the kind of place where you can put down roots. Family homes with gardens, easy access to both city centre and countryside, plus a huge investment in new schools and some of Manchester's best performing primary schools make Wythenshawe a good place to live.

Photography:  
Mike Pilkington  
Matthew Priestley - [www.mattpriestley.co.uk](http://www.mattpriestley.co.uk)

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