



HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER – WHAT IS IT?

Basically a transfer of ownership of the Councils housing stock to another landlord.

New landlord has to be a Registered Social Landlord:-

- Registered and regulated by the Welsh Assembly Government.
- Social – in that it provides housing and services to people in need.
- Landlord – in that it manages and maintains homes for people to rent.

A transfer can only proceed if a majority of tenants vote in favour by a secret ballot.

WELSH PICTURE

Of the 22 Local Authorities

- 11 have already transferred
- 1 has achieved a “Yes” vote and will transfer next spring
- 4 (including the Vale) are due to ballot tenants
- 4 Councils are able to achieve WHQS through their own resources
- 2 have had a “No” vote – but not able to meet WHQS. 1 of these is now likely to ballot tenants again.

WHY IS THE COUNCIL PROPOSING THIS?

All social landlords have to bring their housing stock to a standard called the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.

The standard goes way above bricks and mortar improvements and includes:

Modern facilities such as:

- Good quality kitchens & bathrooms
- Energy efficient
- Modern and affordable heating systems
- Safe and attractive estates
- Secure and enclosed gardens

Not 1 of the Councils 3,900 properties currently meets the WHQS.

CURRENT STOCK SITUATION

Major estate and property problems on large estates such as Gibbonsdown and Buttrills requires extensive regeneration.

Estate environment generally in poor condition.

External appearance of properties very poor.

Internal standards poor and facilities are outdated.

THE COUNCIL'S POSITION

The Council can do a lot of the improvements to the housing stock, however has not got the money to:

- Improve estates
- Undertake major estate regeneration
- Improve the external appearance of it's properties
- To increase staffing

This is mainly because Councils are subject to very complicated financial rules and £5m of tenants rent monies are paid to the treasury each year.

This is money lost to the Vale Council tenants.

THE PROPOSED NEW LANDLORD

Is called Heritage Coast Homes

Set up solely to improve the Councils housing and estates and also to build new homes for social letting.

- Can only operate in the vale.
- Free of Government financial control so free to borrow what it can afford to repay.
- Able to keep all rent monies – nothing lost to the Treasury.
- A Community Housing Mutual and a charity
- Managed by a Board comprising of 4 Tenants, 4 Council Nominees and 4 Independents, with specialist skill

WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED

Meeting the WHQS	Vale of Glamorgan Council	Heritage Coast Homes
Internal Improvements	Yes	Yes
External Property repairs	Yes	Yes
Environmental Improvements/repairs related assets e.g. garages	No	Yes
Major Estate Improvements	No	Yes
Improved Front Line Staffing & Service Delivery	No	Yes
Improved Service to Disabled tenants	No	Yes
Building New Homes	No	Yes

NEXT STEPS

Tenant consultation started.

Formal offer document developed and will be sent to tenants in January.

Offer Document will contain all the promises that Heritage Coast Homes would be legally obligated to achieve in the event of a transfer of the housing stock.

Tenants will vote in a secret ballot in March.

If yes-transfer will take place before March 2012.

If no – Council will try to do what it can. But no extra money for a ‘No’ vote.