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Sir Howard Bernstein (Chief Executive),  
Manchester City Council,  
Town Hall,  
Manchester  
M60 2JX

Robin Lawler (Chief Executive),  
Northwards Housing,  
6th Floor, Hexagon Tower,  
Crumpsall Vale,  
Blackley,  
Manchester  
M9 8ZS

3 January 2008

Dear Sir Howard/Robin,

### **Northwards Housing re-inspection**

I am writing to confirm previous correspondence with Robin about your re-inspection date in 2008. We have now confirmed our programme of inspection slots for 2008/09 and I can confirm that we have allocated Northwards Housing a slot for the on-site weeks commencing 17 and 24 November 2008.

Paul Clarke (your Lead Housing Inspector) will contact you to arrange a meeting about six months before the inspection date, to confirm the scope and focus of the inspection and to explain the timetable in full.

The team will comprise two inspectors, and a tenant inspection advisor and the team will be on site for ten days. Paul will tell you as soon as we have confirmed the Principal Inspector responsible for its co-ordination. He/she will confirm details of the inspection timetable and other practical arrangements for the inspection with both the local authority and the ALMO nearer to the start date.

### **ALMO inspection fees**

We calculate these in the same way that we have done for all ALMO inspections and re-inspections since September 2004, and the fee reflects the full cost of the inspection. We factor in the previous inspection result and the scale of the operations, such as the number of properties the ALMO manages, as these determine the size and scope of the inspection resources required.

On this basis we have calculated that the inspection fee for Northwards Housing will be £45,450, at expected 2008/09 rates. It is possible that the rate may change – the Audit Commission is currently consulting on its fees for 2008/09. As with all ALMO inspections, we will send an invoice to the authority on publication of the final inspection report.

## **Board presentation**

Early in 2008, we will be arranging a one day regional briefing for all organisations in the 2008/09 inspection programme.

However, we would also welcome the opportunity to provide a formal presentation to your ALMO Board and/or managers about the role of the Housing Inspectorate, the inspection process for ALMOs and any recent changes to our methodology. There is no separate charge for this work.

## **Requests for inspection deferrals**

Can I take this last opportunity to make clear our expectation that you will not ask to defer the inspection less than six months before the on-site date. Should you do so, then we will expect the Council to reimburse the Commission for the cost of any preparatory work which we have undertaken up to the point of agreeing the deferral.

If you have a query about any aspect of this letter please do not hesitate to contact either Paul Clarke on 07968 352795, or myself.

Yours sincerely,



Graeme Bennett  
ALMO Inspection and Assessment Co-ordinator



[g-bennett@audit-commission.gov.uk](mailto:g-bennett@audit-commission.gov.uk)



07799-581872

Copies to Clive Portman and Paul Clarke (Audit Commission)