

## Estate Plan

### Belton

**This plan covers the following areas and number of properties:**

Location	No	Location	No	Location	No
Ashtree Close	48	Croft Cottages	1	Sandtoft Road	1
Belwood Close	6	High Street	7	Stockshill	6
Belwood Villas	3	Holland Close Villas	3	Stool Close Road	3
Churchtown	5	Jeffrey Lane	17	Vermuyden Villas	2

### Estate Description

The area has 102 properties made up as follows:

Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	No of Properties (414)
Flats – Ground Floor	15	2	0	0	17
Flats – First Floor	0	17	0	0	17
Bungalows	25	6	0	0	31
Houses	0	5	30	2	37

Over half the properties in this area are concentrated in Ashtree Close where there are mainly flats but some houses. The properties are in need of new kitchens and bathrooms, windows and heating upgrades, particularly to the flats, which suffer from damp. With no gas to the village, choice is limited. There is little defensible space and whilst there are some parking areas, these are pot – holed and away from the flats. Large grassed areas could be remodelled to provide ample parking near to properties. There are very few garages in the area but, of those that remain, some have been renovated in the past few years with new doors, roofs and recovering of the forecourt area.

The rest of the properties are dotted throughout the village and very seldom become empty. These are houses and bungalows and require little management input but do need upgrading and improving generally. There are no community or resident groups in the area.

There is Primary School provision in the village however for Secondary education, pupils have to travel to Epworth, which is a few miles away. The village has very little in the way of local amenities but does have a post office and church, bowling green and playing fields. Local transport is infrequent.

Belton is considered to be a medium growth settlement with many new houses built over the past few years. There is an element of affordable housing with being bungalows provided by Hanover Housing Association.

## **Performance Indicators**

North Lincolnshire Homes has an Asset Management Plan that looks at various indicators. These tell us whether the area is a place where people want to live and remain, whether it is worth investing in the stock and how much it will cost to maintain the properties and bring them up to the Decent Homes Standard which the Government has set. Indicators for this area are as follows:  
(Figures are for the year up to 31/10/08)

### **Red:**

Tenancies under 2 years in length	22.00%
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### **Amber:**

Relets in year as % of tenancies	12.00%
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Transfer requests outwards	7.00%
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### **Green:**

Empty properties at 31/10/08	2.00%
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### **Other indicators:**

Tenancies 2 – 5 years in length	17.00%
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Tenancies 5 + years in length	61.00%
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Potential income after void loss	£290096.58
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Repairs expenditure per annum (07/08 actuals)	£51142.40
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Repairs in voids per annum (07/08 actuals)	£25609.47
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Costs above/below potential income	£213344.71
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Tenants in receipt of housing benefit	73.00%
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## **Comments on Performance Indicators**

The indicators show this to be a stable community with little movement. Although Tenancies under 2 years in length are shown with a red indicator, this % has reduced over the past year and is moving in the right direction. The number of relets in the last 12 months has also decreased to 12% from 16% previously. The number of transfer requests has reduced slightly over the last year but this will always be a factor when much of the stock is flats.

## **North Lincs Decent Homes Standard**

The Government has instructed that all social housing must reach a minimum standard known as the Decent Homes Standard by 2012. However, the North Lincolnshire Standard has been devised by local tenants who want more than the minimum level of improvements to their homes and is the standard North Lincolnshire homes will achieve by 2012.

### **The standard includes:**

- Heating boilers renewed every 15 years
- Heating systems (radiators) renewed every 30 years

- Properties rewired or upgraded where the wiring is over 30 years old – and to ensure that there are adequate power points
- Windows and doors renewed if they are 20 years old
- Properties insulated to maximise energy efficiency
- Bathrooms renewed every 30 years
- Kitchens renewed every 20 years and to have adequate space for storage and the preparation of food
- Renewal of roofing if it is over 50 years old
- Replacement of gutters and fascias that are over 20 years old
- Homes to be free from structural defects that affect the soundness and stability of a home
- Homes to be free from damp and water penetration
- Adequate lighting in communal areas
- Closure of some footpaths to reduce crime
- Controlled entry systems for communal entrances
- Improved access to communal entrances to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act
- Fencing to create secure spaces
- Modern alarm call systems for the elderly
- Improved car parking provision
- Improvements to the environment / landscape

### **Housing Management**

Properties in the area are high demand, as they do not become empty very often. The Housing Officer visits most areas once a week but 2/3 times a week at Ashtree Close where there is the highest concentration of properties. Tenancy enforcement issues are noted and action taken accordingly. Caretakers visit the area regularly to clear rubbish. Ashtree Close is a particularly bad area for litter due to the school opposite and the fact that parents use it for parking when dropping off and picking up their children.

There have been reports of nuisance and anti social behaviour in Ashtree Close particularly due to visiting youths congregating at young person's flats. There are also problems with dogs, which has led to tenancy enforcement action.

Crime within the Axholme Central ward as a whole is fairly low with an average 42 reported crimes per month over the year to December 2004.

Estate inspections have been revised into a traffic light Red, Amber & Green format. The new system is easier to understand and clearly shows to all concerned what the current status is and what needs doing to sign off the inspection to the green standard.

## Actions

In order to plan for the future we need to look at the sustainability of the area. This will depend not only on the properties continuing to be homes that our tenants want to live in but also the area being a safe and secure environment where people want to stay for years to come.

Other works identified specifically for the Belton area are as follows:

- Remodel grassed areas to Ashtree Close and Stockhill to provide better parking facilities via dropped kerbs & hardstandings.
- Look at lighting for the car park which is under utilized.
- Provide fencing to Ashtree Close to create defensible space
- Repair pot holes to Ashtree Close
- Trees to be cut back where they block out light to the properties.
- Consultation on provision of speed ramps
- Upgrade where needed to Digital Aerials.

We have already done the following:

- Looked at the 'make up' of residents in the area
- Gathered crime figures to check types and level of crime
- Checked reports of ASB and nuisance
- Gathered information from staff, stock surveys and other departments
- Worked together with tenant representatives to make decisions on standard fittings in empty homes and selection of contractors (ongoing)
- Negotiated a new agreement with Neighbourhood services for the upkeep of our estates, which clearly indicates standards and regularity of maintenance to the environment.
- Ensure Introductory tenancy visits are carried out as a priority
- Provide a regular caretaking presence on our estates
- Work with Rent Recovery to help prevent people losing their homes
- Provide debt advice / referral when necessary
- Support vulnerable tenants in order to sustain their tenancies
- Consider local letting policies where there is shown to be a need
- Enforce tenancy conditions to ensure clean, tidy and secure environments
- Continue to work with other agencies i.e. Police and Community Safety Partnerships to combat crime and anti – social behaviour
- Work proactively with Health and Adult Services to ensure that older peoples needs are catered for so they can remain in their homes with the correct level of support
- There is a new style estate inspection which rates the area Red, Amber or Green. The first inspection under this new process is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> February 2009@ 2pm.

## **Nat Meetings**

Neighbourhood Action Team meetings take place approximate every 4-6 weeks. They alternate between the villages in the Isle where members of local Police, North Lincolnshire Homes ,Safer Neighbourhoods,Tenants Inspectors and Council members meet together to discuss cases of crime and anti-social behaviour to ensure that the sharing of information means that any problem cases can be tackled through multi-agency working.

The next planned meeting is yet to be confirmed.

## **Estate Inspection**

Estate inspections have been revised into a traffic light Red, Amber & Green format. The new system is easier to understand and clearly shows to all concerned what the current status is and what needs doing in order to sign off the inspection to the green standard.

Estate inspections are carried out by the Housing Officer who will note and act on any tenancy enforcement issues. Any graffiti or rubbish in communal entrance's will be noted and passed to the estate caretakers.

## **Consultation**

To give us more detailed information on tenant's aspirations and what it is like to live in the Belton area, we sent a questionnaire to each tenant

- The response rate was 18%.
- %'s below refer to the number of replies received to each question. Some people chose not to answer or ticked 'No comment'.

### **This is what you told us:**

- 53% are happy with their homes and neighbours
- 67% like the area as they are close to relatives and friends
- 47% like the location (16% commented that this was the best thing about where they lived)
- 32% dislike the size of their home
- 37% consider the area to be noisy / bad
- 32% think the area is unkempt
- 42% commented on the lack of good transport services
- 32% dislike the lack of facilities to the area
- 63% are settled where they are
- 26% would like to move – of these, 50% want a larger property,67% would like more privacy, 33% have had problems with neighbours or have been victims of harassment or anti social behaviour
- 42% would like the caretakers to visit 1 or 2 times a week
- 42% would like a regular bus service

- 32% would like speed ramps – this was considered the most important improvement needed
- 37% would like a planned painting programme
- 26% would like more local amenities
- 32% would like tidy roads and communal areas
- 74% are not happy with the police presence in the area

### **Proposed Improvements**

The stock condition survey has identified investment works needed to our properties. Belton is timetabled for all improvement works to start in April 2011. Subsequent programmes in future years will pick up environmental and estate related issues. Some ad-hoc improvement works have already taken place but these are only scheduled in if there is an urgent need. To date the following has been replaced:

#### **Belton progress**

Bathroom Fittings	2
Boiler Replacement	3
Central Heating Systems	7
External Doors	1
Fires	4
Kitchen	1
Windows	3
Wiring	3

The business plan budget allocated for improvement works in Belton is **£1,253,960**. By October 2008 a total of **£36,210** has been expended on all improvement work.

The stock condition survey told us that in order for all our homes to meet the North Lincs Decent Homes Standard around £164 million needs to be spent over the next 10 years on repairs and improvements.

In order to meet the North Lincs standard the following work needs to be carried out before 2012.

<b><u>Element</u></b>	<b><u>Programme Numbers</u></b>
Bathroom Fittings	6,129
Boiler Replacement	1,193
Central Heating Systems	3,756
Chimney	3,793
External Doors	6,675
External Walls	3,275
Fires	3,092
Kitchen	5,056

Roof	4,608
Roof Line	4,386
Windows	5,721
Wiring	6,420

### **In Conclusion**

This plan will continue to be reviewed and updated. Whilst environmental improvements may well be the priority for residents, initial spending will have to focus on works to improve tenant's homes to ensure that the North Lincs Decent Homes Standard is met. However, it is also important that people feel safe and secure in their homes, and want to live and remain in them for many years to come – which is why estate improvements and environmental works have been identified. North Lincolnshire Homes want to meet the aspirations of tenants and although it does not have the resources to carry out all of the works that are needed it is important to identify the priorities for each estate.